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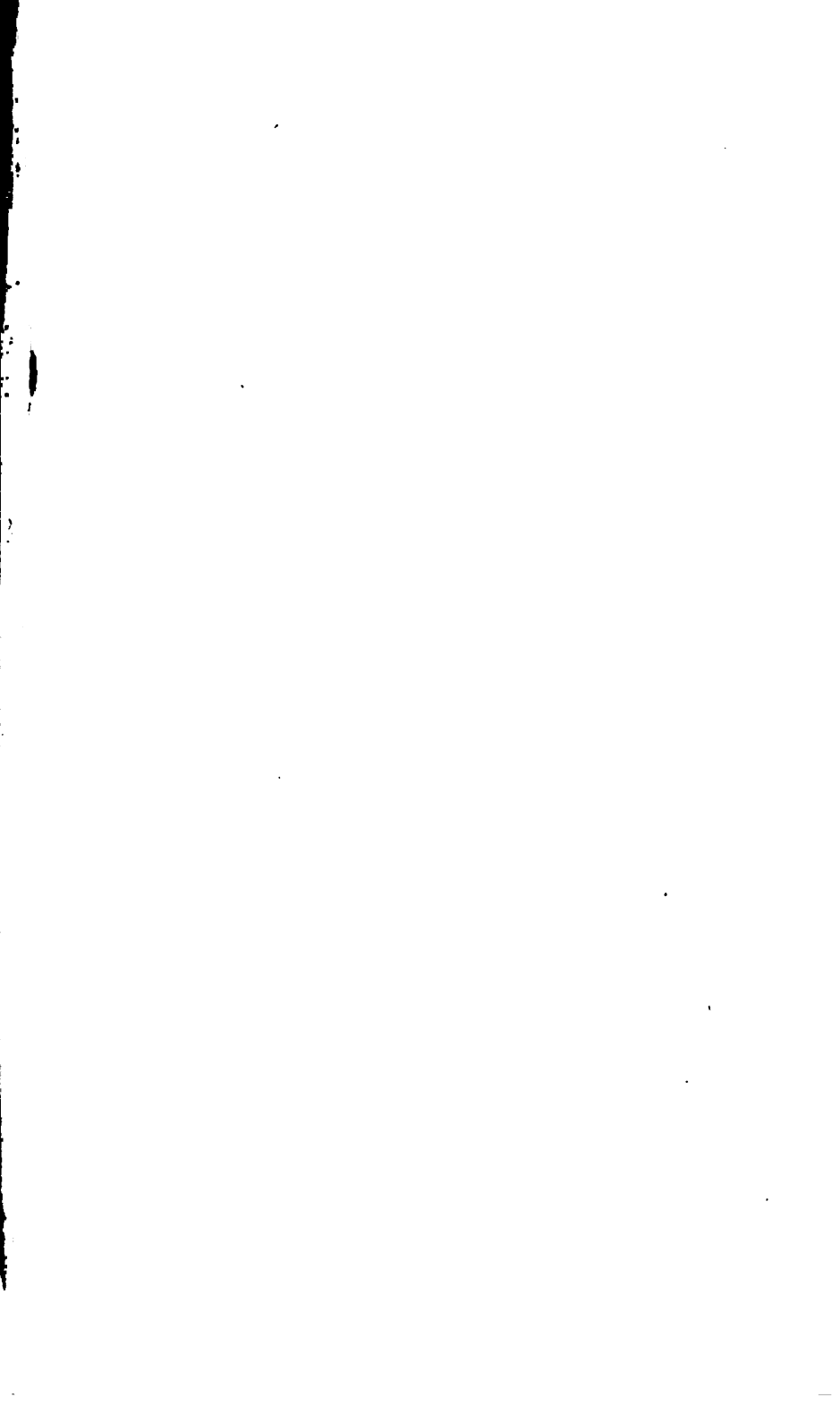
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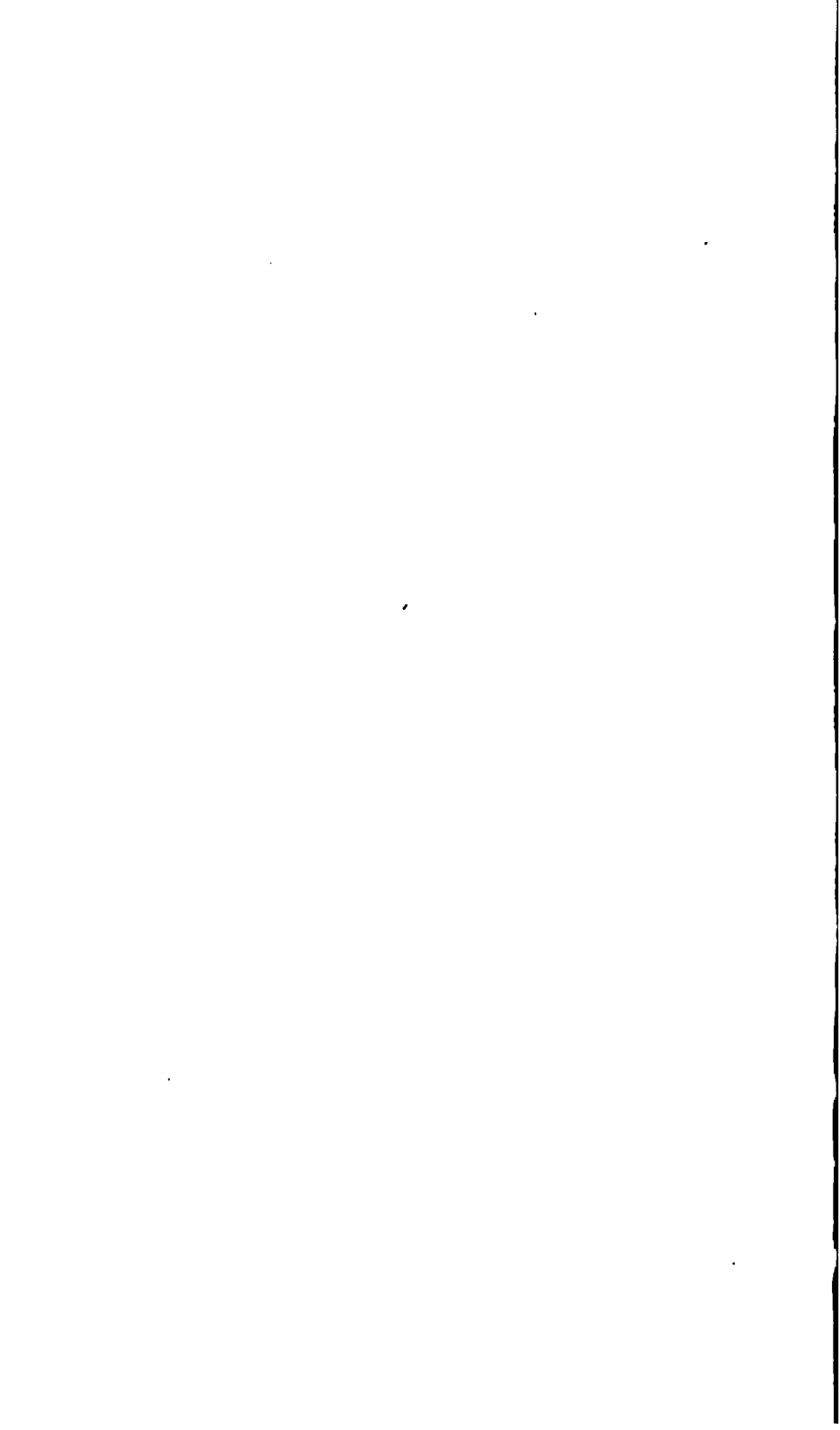
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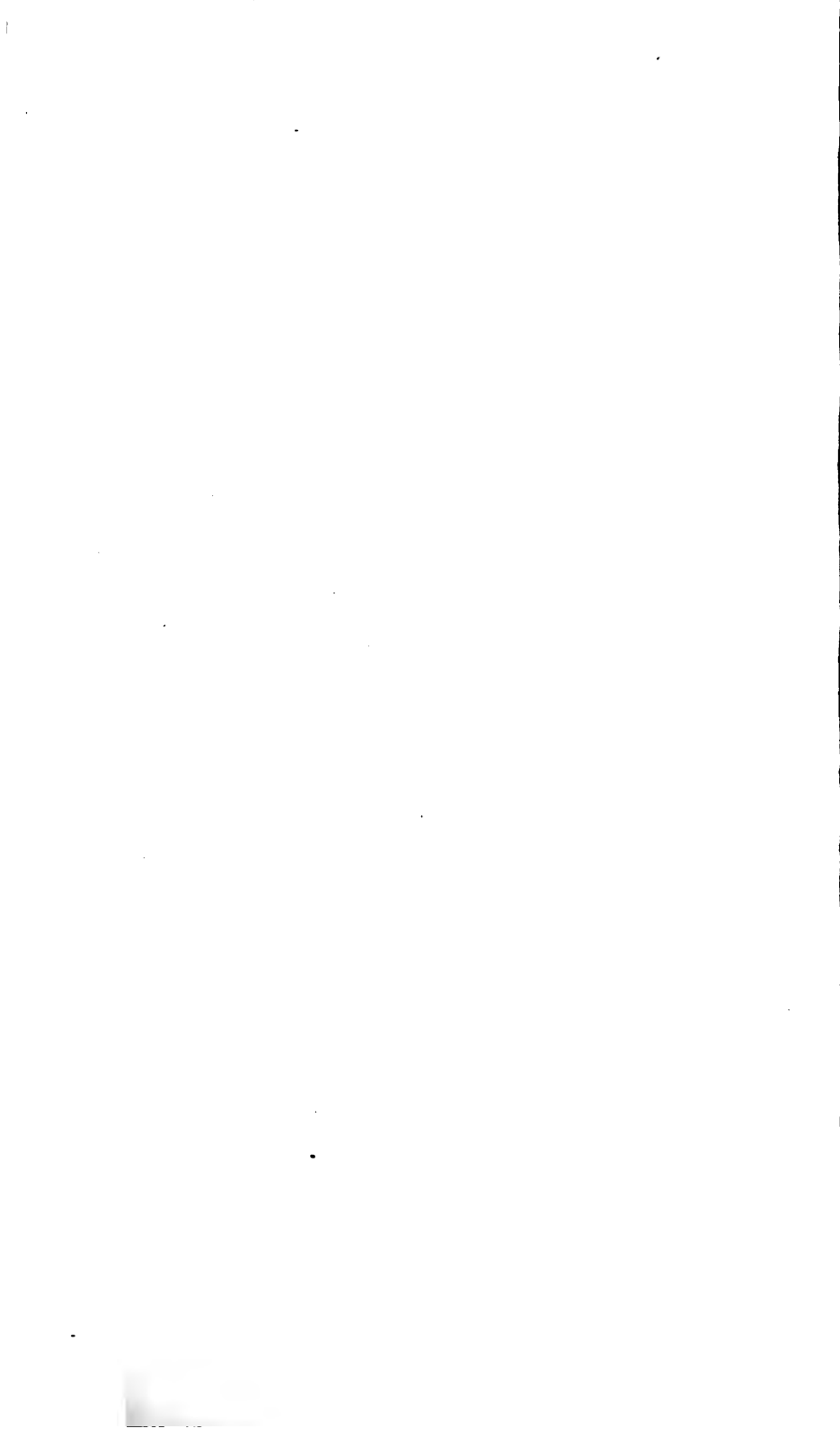
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THE
CORRESPONDENT,

FROM

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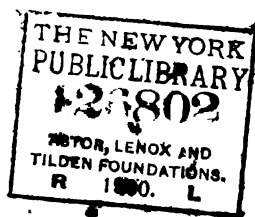
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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 1.

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VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SPIRITS AND DEMONS.

Mr. Editor—There is a strange propensity in the human mind to prodigy; to whatever causes surprise or astonishment; and to admire what we do not understand. We are not affected by things which we frequently see. If we can trace but one link of the infinite chain of causes, our admiration ceases, though we are then as far from our journey's end as when we set out; for all the works of Nature appear miraculous until we have traced their origin. In this sense, every thing may be regarded a miracle though we ought to be no more surprised at seeing a blazing comet, which makes its revolution but once in 500 years, than in seeing the sun every day.

If one or two men affirm, that they saw another man leap twenty yards at one leap, there is no one who will believe this assertion. But if the same men say, that they actually saw in a churchyard a goblin, with saucer eyes and cloven feet, leap over the spire of the building, all the inhabitants of the town or village become so alarmed, that few of them will venture to go abroad in a dark night. The tale of an old woman inhabiting a cat, or flying in the air on a broomstick, sets them a staring, and staggers their incredulity. How often has it been said and believed, that spirits have appeared to discover lost silver spoons, hidden money, and sometimes murders that had been perpetrated in secret many years before. But we never hear of a tyrant, who, by private murders, has slaughtered thousands, and by public butcheries, destroyed millions of human beings—we never hear of such a one being dragged out of his court by good or evil spirits, as a terror to such monsters. Such an instance would have done more to convince the world of the existence of these governing spirits, and of their utility, than the testimony of all the pious men in the world, whatever may have been their rank or talents. If God thought fit to work by such instruments, and intended that we should believe in them, it is impossible to doubt that he would adopt the properest methods to command attention. But those wonder workers never performed any thing of real use, and we have no other evidence of their pretended supernatural communications, than the veracity of those to whom they are said to have been made, and who were liable to be deceived themselves, or disposed to invent falsehoods to deceive others. The proof ought always to be equal to the importance of the thing told; for when it is more probable that a man should tell a lie, or be deceived, than that a strange phenomenon should exist, there can be no difficulty to determine on which

side of the question truth is to be found. It is a melancholy fact, however, notwithstanding the clearness of these principles, that most men are so prepared by education to believe these stories, that they will repose the utmost confidence in them, on testimony which they would reject in the most ordinary concerns of life.

For many ages, the phenomena of meteors, eclipses, and comets, seemed unaccountable; and the causes of thunder and lightning were as unknown to the world as they are to the unlettered children of the forest, of the present day. Cannon were esteemed by the aborigines of this country to be angry deities—ships, floating monsters—the sun, to be the God of the world—watches, to be living animals—paper and ink, to be spirits, which conveyed men's thoughts from one to another; and a dancing mare was, little more than a century ago, burned for a witch by the Christian inquisitors of Portugal.

All Nature is in perpetual motion; and in the great variety of appearances which this occasions, some will seem very extraordinary, yet have as certain regular causes as the most obvious mechanic operations. We cannot penetrate into the internal frame and constitution of every thing. We have but a very slight knowledge of the principles and contexture of animal and vegetable beings; consequently we cannot know what Nature can spontaneously produce, or how she works. We see only the outside of things, and no more of them than what is necessary to our preservation or convenience. Nature also works by innumerable ways impenetrable to our vain and fruitless inquiries: the loadstone draws iron towards it; the sensitive plant shrinks from the touch; some plants attract, and twine round each other; while others avoid one another, and grow apart. There are many other surprising instances of the powers of matter and motion, that must have come under our observation; and, without doubt, there are numberless others of which we know nothing. But if these minute insignificant works of Nature cause so much astonishment, how ought we to be amazed at the greater productions? The earth itself is but a grain of sand in the visible world. What must it then be when compared with the immense bodies which the eye cannot reach? Is it not likely that the many fellow planets of our sphere, which move round the sun as we do, are filled with inhabitants, and not improbably with more valuable ones than ourselves. And is it not almost certain, that the numerous fixed stars nightly seen in the heavens, and the more numerous ones frequently discovered by the telescope, are so many different suns, with each a different system of worlds revolving round them, and receiving vital warmth and nourishment from their beams? We have not faculties to perceive and know things as they are, but only in such points of view as Nature has represented them. We have only talents suited to our wants; and here is our *ne plus ultra*—the farthest we can go. We may be sure that we are not obliged to know what is beyond our power to know. All such things are to us as non-entities.

There is no occasion to recur to supernatural causes, to account for what may be easily accounted for by our ignorance of natural ones—by the fraud or folly of others, or by imposing on ourselves. Which of our senses do not frequently deceive us? Strangling, or strong pressure of

the eyes, causes every thing to appear on fire; that of the ears makes us hear noises; straight things in the water appear crooked. Bodies, by reflection or refraction, seem otherwise, and in other places than they are in nature. All things appear yellow to the jaundiced; melancholy and enthusiastic persons fancy themselves to be glass bottles, knives, and tankards. Madmen often believe that they are gods or princes, and almost always see spirits; and one of your reverend parsons, a few years ago, in England, thought himself far gone in pregnancy, and could not be persuaded to the contrary, till a man midwife pretended to deliver him of a false conception.

In fevers and malignant distempers, people see visions and apparitions of angels, devils, dead men, or whatever else their fancy renders most agreeable or terrible. In dreams all men see, or suppose they see, such false appearances. Their imaginations in sleep are often so lively and vigorous, that they can scarcely be persuaded of their mistake when they are awake, and would not be so if they did not find themselves in bed. If a credulous, timid, or melancholy person should carelessly fall asleep in his closet or garden, and imagine he saw a representation of an angel, demon, or dead man speaking to him, and waking on a sudden without observing that he had been asleep, (which frequently happens,) I cannot see how he should distinguish this appearance or phantom from a real vision or revelation.

Notwithstanding the obvious absurdity of attributing these occurrences to supernatural agency, we every where find men resisting the light, and strenuously maintaining that there are such beings as devils, who play hide and seek on earth; who are permitted to run up and down, and divert themselves by seducing ignorant men and women—entering into cats—making noises, and playing monkey tricks in churchyards and empty houses, or any where else but in empty heads. But the advocates for Satan's empire are not very consistent with themselves. They give the chief of these demons the power of working miracles—make him prince of the air—lord of the hidden minerals—wise, rich, and powerful, as well as false, treacherous, and wicked; and are presumptuous enough to bring him on the stage as a rival for empire with the Almighty; while at the same time they put a fool's coat and cap on him, and make him play all manner of antics, though with all his cunning he has not for the last eighteen hundred years invented one new trick, but goes on in the same dull road; for there is scarcely a story told of a spirit, witch, ghost, or hobgoblin, who has played pranks during the whole of that period, but we have the same story in Cicero's treatise on divination. "Glanville on Witches," and "Satan's Invisible World Discovered," books held in high estimation among Christians, are substantially the same as the work of Cicero, who, himself, borrowed his ideas of demonology from the ancients.

To be continued.

PROFESSORS AND BELIEVERS.

Sir—Your paper has been received, and is of a character highly satisfactory. Such works are very much wanted; and there must have been a greater degree of moral courage among those who have organized the

"Free Press Association," than I had expected in any of our citizens. It is a great daring for an individual to express freely his own opinions upon the falsehood, folly, and mischievous effects of what is called *revealed religion*, to one of his friends, without a thought of publishing or propagating them; and it has even become fashionable for those who disbelieve every word of it, to be the most zealous and munificent supporters of "public worship," of priests, theological seminaries, bible societies, missions, and all the machinery and craft by which the clergy are aiming to enthrall the human mind in this otherwise free country, and to draw from the labors of others the means of living in luxury and ease. Ask them why they do so? They answer, "Because there is no better way of keeping the ignorant multitude in order!" "The people of all countries," they say, "have had some kind of religion, and if you destroy that of the bible, they would have something else."

The conformity of such men to the popular customs of the country in this matter, saves them from a great deal of abuse, obloquy, and persecution from the dominant bigots; but it is, in fact, the real cause of sustaining and perpetuating one of the greatest evils that ever afflicted the human race. Their consenting to, and sinister support of what they know to be false, rather than to take the hazard and trouble of opposing and exposing it, does more, in the direct estimate of the aggregate means of keeping it in existence, than all the exertions of all the priests in our country.

This assertion is a bold one, and will not be credited at first; but let any man travel through this state, or even the state of "steady habits," and take a census of the professors, and another of the non-professors—let him go into almost any congregation, count these two classes, and ascertain, with the certainty of omniscience, who believe the "fish stories" in earnest, and who do not, and he will find a large majority of the *men*, the directors and payers in public matters, who do *not* believe a syllable of the nonsense they support. In the congregations within my knowledge, not one in five are professors, and not more than half those are in reality believers; and among the men of education and talents, I do not know one in fifty that believe, whatever their professions may be; and the pecuniary support derived from non-professors within my acquaintance, is at least as four to one.

Now, if all this was withheld, or applied to the purposes of a rational and useful education of the rising generation, how long, think you, would the professors hold out and support their devil, their hell, their priests, and their missionary, tract, and bible societies? Suppose all the non-professors—(and I cannot imagine how a *believer* can a moment be a non-professor; for who in his senses, believing that "whosoever shall be ashamed to confess Christ before men, of him shall Christ be ashamed in the day of judgment," and that he will certainly be cast into a lake of "fire and brimstone," to roast alive (not dead) to all eternity, could dare to delay a single moment to make a public profession?)—I say, suppose all the non-professors, who are consequently unbelievers, were to lay out as much money—have as many preachers—take as much pains—control as absolutely all the sources of education, and direct them as assiduously to the suppression of Christianity, and the establishment and sup-

port of "Natural Religion," or philosophy and truth, as the professors and supporters of Christianity now do for exactly the contrary purposes, how long would there be a Christian priest in this country?

There is nothing wanting but *concert* and *courage* among the friends of truth and liberty to effect a radical cure for the evils arising from priestcraft. There is, indeed, a sad mistake fast fixed in the minds of many otherwise correct thinking men. I can exemplify my view of it by stating a single fact. A very sensible man of my acquaintance went a few days ago to hear a real blue-light, revival-making Calvinist preach an ordination sermon. He returned laughing, and repeated several passages of the sermon; such for instance as "the certainty that God has fixed an eternal place of infinite punishment for sinners, and the never ending view of it through all eternity, should now, with Christians, and will hereafter, constitute one of the highest sources of gratulation and happiness with all the saints and angels in the paradise of God—that *moral* discourses from the pulpit are worse than useless—that God had determined before the foundation of the world, who should be elected to salvation, and who should be passed over, and reprobated to that awful, eternal punishment." I asked him if he believed such stuff? "No," said he, "but I support it because it is the only way you can keep the *raggamuffins* in order. The more brimstone a priest deals out, the better I like him." "Abominable!" said I—"How came these *raggamuffins*? Have they not been made so by your *brimstone* system? How came you better than they, and less in need of these out-pourings of your favorite brimstone? Was it not because you, some way or other, got above believing such detestable trash? Suppose you take as much pains to instruct them in *truth* and *sound philosophy*, as is now taken to impress a belief in such unnatural, revolting, unavailing nonsense as you have been hearing, how long would they bear the character of *raggamuffins*?"

Such papers as yours are calculated to rectify such mistakes, and I wish it success.

Yours truly,

HISTORY OF SAMUEL.

Continued from No. 25, Vol. 1.

The return of the ark to the Hebrews is, of course, attended with prodigies; but they prove more the want of judgment in the narrator than the credulity of the people. This writer asserts, that in one village alone, where curiosity induced the peasants to look into the ark, God struck with death 50,000 of these inquisitive people. In the sacerdotal style, it is always God who slays and exterminates; but as there is not, and never has been, a village with 50,000 inhabitants, and even not 3000, it is clear that we must suppress several zenos, and perhaps all. The object of our Levite is to frighten the vulgar, and stifle that spirit of research and examination which is the dread of impostors and charlatans. The ark was deposited in the village of Gabaa, where it remained peaceable for twenty years. At the death of Eli, Samuel was twenty-

two or twenty-four; he was now, then, forty-two or forty-four, in the vigor of mind and maturity of judgment. How had he passed this long interval? The book does not inform us; it is a dry chronicle, a true skeleton, despoiled of its ligaments. But the result proves that it has not missed its time: circumstances were embarrassing. The Hebrews, overwhelmed by two bloody defeats, had neither moral nor military energy. The enemy, master of the country, watched all their movements. Their jealousy would not permit them even to have smiths, lest they should manufacture arms. Policy burdened them with tribute of all kinds, and divided them by perfidious preferences.

Samuel retired into his native country, where, having carried his reputation of a prophet, he could not fail to have enemies. Where is one less a prophet than in his own country? It was necessary to calm the passions of his countrymen; to deceive foreign emissaries; to dissemble his credit, his capacity; and, moreover, to prepare the means to throw off an insupportable yoke by an unlooked for and successful revolt. At the end of the twenty years mentioned, this revolt breaks out. Suddenly the cry is heard to assemble the Hebrews to the camp of Mispheh, where the Philistines soon arrive to oppose them. In war, one of the first means of success is confidence in the man who commands, especially if he has not the practice or art of fighting. Here there was nothing but the peasants raised *en masse*, exactly as is done yet among the Druze. In such men, confidence arises from the idea which the talents of their chief and the excellence of their position inspires. Samuel, who had the choice of these means, already had a great advantage. The locality of Mispheh, on the edge of a plain, cut up into ravines and hillocks, put it into his power to accept or refuse battle. Thus posted, it was evident he waited the favorable moment. He knew the extreme superstition of both combatants. A prodigy was necessary; an omen similar to those of all ancient people. He examines around him; he perceives in the atmosphere the indication of a storm; the attendants press him to entreat God in favor of the chosen people; he announces a sacrifice; he immolates a lamb; he invokes Jehuh with loud outcries; the Philistines begin the attack; the thunder roars; the Jews are persuaded that God answers to the priest; they charge with energy, and the enemy is beaten. Such is the substance of chapter 7, clothed with the probabilities omitted by the narrator. The success of this day was such that the conquered Philistines gave up the districts which they had so long retained, and ceased troubling the Hebrew people whom they governed.

Here commences the judgeship of Samuel; the exercise of that power to which he had so long aspired. The victory of Mispheh put him in a new and better situation. But we must not be deceived. In a democratic state, as was that of the Hebrews; among a people composed of peasants, spread over a country intersected with mountains, woods, and ravines, where each family lived on its property; where there existed neither municipal subordination, nor organized military force, nor even a town of 6000 inhabitants, it is evident the exercise of power is submitted to a divided opinion, susceptible of many vicissitudes. Superstition was the general and common bond; but this superstition is not always

an obstacle to the contest of interests and passions. In such a state of things, it cannot be denied that Samuel governed with prudence and talent, since the whole of his administration was peaceable within and without. The proof of this is, that the narrator tells us Samuel did not cease to judge, and that, becoming old, he made his children judges with him, to prepare them to succeed him. This duration (not expressed) comprehends twenty years, which makes Samuel sixty-two or sixty-four years old when, contrary to his wish, he was forced to nominate a king.

This step, which the divine foresight of Samuel did not anticipate, was caused by the base conduct of his children, who, like those of Eli, found the secret to irritate and scandalize the people by their vexations, their debaucheries, and their impiety. Here we see the general operation of perverted nature, which, without ever profiting by example and experience, always falls into the same circle of habits, the same passions. The fathers arrive at power by much toil and trouble; the children, born in abundance, and a wrong direction given to their passions, abandon themselves to vicious practices and habits. Nevertheless, it is believed that, on this occasion, the discontent of the multitude was nourished by the secret opposition of powerful families, perhaps sacerdotal, who were shocked to have for chief and master a man of low origin, an upstart. Among the Druze and Arabs of the present day, this prejudice about ancient, rich, and noble families, has a great influence on popular opinion. At the time of which we speak, a conspiracy was evidently formed; for, according to the historian, a deputation from the sages of Israel came to find Samuel, at his paternal residence at Ramatha, to demand from him a king—a royal government constituted like that of the neighboring people, to whose example generally his attention was directed. The answer which he gave to this deputation, and the details of his conduct in this affair, disclose the anger of disappointed ambition, of a pride deeply wounded. It was necessary for him to bend to force, to yield to necessity. But we shall see him in the execution exhibit a cunning intellect even to perfidy, which, by its analogy to the adventures in the temple, his pretended visions and nocturnal revelations, discovers all his character.

They forced Samuel to name a king. He might, he ought to have chosen the man the most capable by his talents and by his resources, to fill this eminent post. But this he avoided. Such a man would reign by himself, and not obey him. A docile subject was necessary. He sought him in a family of low degree, without adherents, but having that exterior which would impose on the people. His choice was that of one who, having just enough sense necessary to transact ordinary business, was constantly under the necessity of recurring to a benefactor, who could preserve a strict hand over him. Samuel, in a word, selected a handsome man of war, who should possess the executive, and be his lieutenant, while he would continue to hold the legislative reigning power. Here is the secret of all the conduct which we shall see him pursue in the elevation of Saul, in the disgrace of this king, and in the substitution of David, another trait of sacerdotal machiavelism.

There was a man in the tribe of Benjamin named Kish, large and strong. His son, named Saul, was the handsomest among the children

of Israel; he was taller by a head than ordinary. It happened one day that the asses of Kish were lost. He said to his son, take a servant and go and seek them. Saul traversed the mountains of Ephraim; then the country of Shalisha, without finding them; then the country of Shalim and that of Temini, when he came to that of Zuph, where Samuel lived.

Saul wished to return, but his servant said to him, There is in this district a man of God much respected; all that he says comes to pass; let us consult him; he will enlighten us. Saul answered, We have nothing to give him. I have about me, says the servant, a quarter of a shekel of silver, (40 sous or pennies) I will give it to the seer; for then, says the text, they called seer (*rah*) what now is called prophet (*nabia*.)

In these times of ignorance and of rustic credulity, the Hebrews partook with the Greeks of Homer, and the Romans of Numa, and with all the people of antiquity, the belief in divines, in the tellers of oracles and good fortune, and that Samuel was one of those divines. Our biblists try in vain to point out a difference between the divination of the Jews and that of the pagans (*i. e.* paysaus or peasants.) These are subtleties without foundation. Customs, as well religious as civil, were the same. The books of the Jews furnished proof, at each page, of being continually reproached for idolatry by their own writers. This desire, in fact, to know the future, so predominant in the human heart—that knavish art of taking advantage of credulity to make money—are epidemic diseases, which have not ceased to reign throughout all antiquity. See the picture drawn by Cicero in his curious book on divination: see how, under the name of Atticus, he depicts not the common people only, but governors and philosophers prejudiced with this belief, and maintaining it with arguments which shake, even at this day, many people who laugh at it. How should this superstition not have prevailed in former times, when among us, in the midst of our sciences and the numerous classes of enlightened men by which we are surrounded, it is not extinct? In Italy, Switzerland, and France, they continue to consult the sorcerer, when the villages are filled with drawers of cards; and even in the heart of the capitals there still exist diviners and divinesses, seers, male and female, who are consulted by the rich as well as by the poor, by the clergy as by the laity. We need not be astonished, then, that among the Jewish mountaineers this predilection was general, habitual, and even authorized; for it is seen that their king, Saul, consulted a fortuneteller, a true delphic Pythias, to make Samuel appear. In the time of Jeremiah, king Josiah and the priests went to consult the fortuneteller Holdah. It would be a useful and curious work to treat anew, and to the bottom, the subject of diviners, oracles, ghosts, and aerial spirits. In the last century, the learned, such as Van Dale of Holland, and Fontenelle of France, merely glanced at it. It might enlarge on the proceedings and management of the ancient servants and agents of the temples—on the system of knavery generally adopted by the ministers of worship of all sects; a source of reflection which this age, notwithstanding its pride, shows still the necessity. But I must not lose sight of my subject:—let us return to Saul and his servant on the road to consult the seer.

To be continued.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH.

Continued from No. 23, Vol. 1.

28. It is a fact, that the "*firmaments*" mentioned by Moses have the most absurd and contradictory definitions ever used by any mortal; and bear incontestible evidence that such random guesses never could proceed from any God. For in the sixth verse Moses says, "And God said let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." 7th, "And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament, and it was so." It is a perfect chaos, without any form or fixture, either in Heaven, on earth, or under the earth. For, in the 6th verse, he places it in the *midst of the waters*; in the 7th we find another *under the waters*; and in a third *above the waters*; and in the 8th verse we have another in the *heavens*; and in the 15th and 17th verses we find it again described as a part of the *heaven*; and lastly, in the 20th verse, we find it *very near the earth*; for it is there described to be, where the *fowl may fly above the earth*, in the open *firmament of heaven!!!*

29. It is a fact, that as none of our fowls fly higher than about one mile, so it follows, that this "firmament" of Moses must rest on this earth.

30. It is a fact, that Moses has provided a "*heaven*" for his "*fowls*," but none for his countrymen; nor even a *hell* for the wicked!

31. It is fact, that Moses says, in the 12th verse, "And God said, let the earth bring forth grass," &c. Now it would, at least, have been a little more rational, as well as creditable, to have made the earth produce "*grass*," &c. after the creation of the sun, instead of before it.

32. It is a fact, that Moses declares, in the 14th verse, "And God said, let there be lights in the firmament, the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years." But, the truth is, those "*lights*" do not "*divide*" the day from the night, because that days and nights are produced by the diurnal rotations of the earth on its own axis! and as to the "*lights*" in the heaven, they were created for nobler purposes than for "*signs or seasons*," or for "*days and years*."

33. It is a fact, that Moses informs you, in the 16th verse, "That God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also." When the truth is, the greater part of this verse is composed of palpable falsehoods! For it is manifest to every competent judge, that whether we confine the narrative to the universe or to our own solar system, it is still nothing but falsehoods. To a man of Moses's ignorance, his story of "two great lights" will, no doubt, prove satisfactory; but those who have read the first rudiments of geography or astronomy, will pronounce it a tissue of childish guesses, founded on the apparent size of the moon with those stars which were too trifling to attract the farther attention of Moses. When the fact is, that every fixed star is believed to be so many thousand times larger than one of his "two great lights."

34. It is a fact, that if Moses had been really "inspired" by God, he would have taught these pretended prophets the truth, instead of falsehoods; or is it easier for God to teach them lies, than the pure truth?

35. It is a fact, that Moses declares, in the 17th verse, "And God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth." Those who believe, with Moses, that our earth is the greatest and most important sphere in the universe, have some excuse at least for imagining that the sun, moon, and all the stars, are only creations of a second day order, and merely intended as so many lamps, to attend the movements of this great earth.

36. But it is a fact, which every philosopher or man of reading believes, that all the fixed stars are suns as large as our own, and created for far nobler purposes than to "give light" to our speck of earth.

37. It is a fact, that Moses says, in the 26th verse, "And God said, let us make man in our own image, after our own likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." (27th v.) "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them." But these two verses have opened a wide field for controversy, as well as for conjectures: both are to the meaning of the plural number, as also that of "image." For a while some have contended for a plurality of Gods; the greater part of Christians, with equal propriety, perhaps, have insisted that it was God the Father consulting with God, no God, the Son, and God, no God, the Holy Ghost! But it is evident, from all the writings of Moses, that he believed his God had a visible form, and that it resembled that of man; and also that God had created great angels after the same "image." It is therefore highly probable that when Moses made God use the plural, "Let us make man in our own image," &c. he did not intend to represent him as consulting with any one; but merely as announcing his will and pleasure, and calling on them to witness the creation.

To be continued.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 28, 1827.

We commence the second volume of the *Correspondent* under highly favorable circumstances. When we projected the work, there were but few of our friends who did not entertain doubts as to its success.—The influence of the clergy was so predominant, and a *profession* of religion had become so fashionable and indispensable, that any attempt to give another direction to popular opinion was considered a hopeless task. Notwithstanding these unfavorable appearances, we never for a single moment entertained any apprehensions as to the result. We had for many years observed the rapid advance of knowledge, and had the best reasons for believing, that even among those who, from interested motives, or a want of moral courage, allowed themselves to be borne along with the tide, there were many, very many, who cherished liberal

principles, and who felt disposed to aid in any prudent measure which might render them more generally known.

Even had no opposition existed, our success would have been viewed as unexpected; but having had to combat with deep rooted prejudices, with the bitter assaults of an enslaved and unprincipled press, and, above all, with the secret machinations of a powerful, interested, and arrogant priesthood, the advantage ground on which we now stand, may be regarded as a triumph of no ordinary magnitude.

If inducements had been wanting to stimulate us to exertion, nothing could have done this more effectually than the numerous letters we have received, approbating the temperate manner in which we have exposed the futile arguments of our opponents, and carefully avoided the acrimonious language with which they have assailed us. In pursuing a course so gratifying to our numerous patrons, we cannot but felicitate ourselves on having redeemed the pledge which we gave in our prospectus, that "no illiberal discussions or personalities would be permitted to pollute our columns; and that it should be our constant aim to establish a character for temperate and sober reasoning, for open investigation, and for universal conciliation."

Being now relieved from many difficulties that attended the publication of the *Correspondent*, we shall be the more able to continue our labors with unabated, if not increased zeal—confidently relying on the unremitting cooperation of the friends of truth in our attempt to rescue mankind from their present state of mental bondage. If, by the limited means that have hitherto been employed in attacking the hydra Superstition, the head of that monster has already been sensibly wounded, may we not expect, from an increase of strength directed towards the same object, that the victory will be speedily consummated?

* * From arrangements now making, we shall soon be in a condition not only to print, without interruption or inconvenience, our own paper, and every thing calculated to promote the objects of the *Free Press Association*, but also to execute, on liberal terms, and in a satisfactory manner, all kinds of printing with which we may be favored.—We have already announced, that subscribers who intend binding the *Correspondent*, can have this done to any pattern, by sending to the office of publication, corner of Vesey street and Broadway.

The Antidote.—The Editors of this paper will find themselves mistaken, if they suppose that we could be diverted from our purpose, either by their rant, their railing, or their misrepresentations. Why persist in vaunting about "the efficacy of that glorious law of revelation," as they call the bible, when the question, not only as to its *divine authority*, but as to its *authenticity* remains unsettled? We are not disposed to admit that these points have been set at rest by any writer that ever existed.—We conceive ourselves as capable of investigating the subject as any of those champions of Christianity on whose opinions the conductors of the *Antidote* place so much reliance. We care not a fig for high sounding names or authorities, when the matter at issue is as capable of proof,



and as much a subject of inquiry at this day, as it was eighteen hundred years ago ; at which period those who are said to have been eye witnesses of the transactions, treated them as unworthy of notice, and the actors as impostors and knaves. The result of our investigations, during a long series of years, has been that the Christian religion, as well as all other religions now professed, except the religion of Nature, have originated in craft, and are supported by fraud. Our opponents, instead of meeting the question fairly, would, good pious souls, have us to believe, *on their word*, that our conclusions have been erroneous ; and because we do not possess "poorness of spirit" sufficient to induce us to renounce our faculties, and to become vassals of the church, they consider themselves privileged to denounce us as heirs of hell, and children of the devil. "Take care (say they) gentlemen, Deists ; there is a pit before you ; look out in time, or you will fall therein ; that is to say, in plain scriptural language, He that believeth not *shall be damned*." Such is the language ; such the sum total of all the arguments of these "advocates of truth," when we call on them to *prove* the *truth* of their system.

But this is not all : these very "honest," very "pious," and very "conscientious" Christians, feel no hesitation in *distorting facts*, when they find they cannot combat them by fair argument. We could point out several instances of this dereliction from principle, if our limits would permit. For the present, we shall notice one in their 8th No. which they have unblushingly repeated in their 9th. They charge us with having at one time *denied* the existence of David, king of Israel, and at another time, of having *admitted* his existence. That we did dispute the validity of the evidence offered to prove the existence of this "royal rebel, robber, and murderer," we readily admit. But that we ever expressed an opinion to the contrary, we utterly deny. In page 347 of the *Correspondent* we remarked, "But admitting, *for the sake of argument*, that there was such a personage as king David, and that the story told of him in the bible is true, we feel no difficulty in being able, on that evidence alone, to support the charge of his having been 'an unnatural monster,' and that his whole history was stained with acts of the most savage barbarity." Aware that we had succeeded in demonstrating all this, the Editors of the *Antidote*, in place of honestly acknowledging the fact, turn round upon us with the charge of having been guilty of *contradiction*, when it must have been evident to every impartial mind, that our reasoning was merely *hypothetical*. Yet these are the men who set themselves up as "*honest*" champions of the truth, as "*impartial* defenders" of a religion which, they say, is *purity* itself, and which they have voluntarily come forward to protect against what they choose to call the "poison of infidelity." Could a better proof be offered of the Christian religion having originated in fraud and imposture, than when we find its most "zealous" defenders of the present day resorting to such base and unjustifiable means to prevent its overthrow ?

Ecce Homo!—This work (complete) is now on sale at the office of the Correspondent, corner of Vesey street and Broadway, and at the bookstore corner of Reed and Greenwich streets ; price 75 cents, in boards. A liberal deduction will be given on quantities purchased for distribution.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGION, BY M. DIDEROT.

Doubts in religious matters, far from being blameable—far from being acts of impiety, ought to be regarded as praiseworthy, when they proceed from a man who humbly acknowledges his ignorance, and arise from the fear of offending God by the abuse of reason.

To admit any conformity between the reason of man, and the eternal reason of God, and to pretend that God demands the sacrifice of human reason, is to maintain that God wills one thing, and intends another thing at the same time.

When God, of whom I hold my reason, demands of me to sacrifice it, he becomes a mere juggler that snatches from me what he pretended to give.

If I renounce my reason, I have no longer a guide—I must then blindly adopt a *secondary principle*, and the matter in question becomes a supposition.

If reason be a gift of Heaven, and we can say as much of *faith*, Heaven has certainly made us two presents not only incompatible, but in direct contradiction to each other. In order to solve the difficulty, we are compelled to say either that faith is a chimera, or that reason is useless.

Pascal, Nicole, and others, have said, that God will punish with eternal torments the faults of a guilty father upon all his innocent offspring; and that this is a proposition *superior* to reason, and not in *contradiction* to it; but what shall we propose as being contradictory to reason if such blasphemy as this is not so?

Bewildered in an immense forest during the night, and having only one small torch for my guide, a stranger approaches, and thus addresses me:—"Friend, blow out thy light, if thou wouldst make sure of the right path." This stranger was a priest.

If my reason be the gift of Heaven, it is the voice of Heaven that speaks; shall I hearken to it?

Neither merit nor demerit is applicable to the judgment of our rational faculties, for all the submission and good will imaginable could not assist the blind man in perception of colors.

I am compelled to perceive evidence where it is, or the want of evidence where it is not, so long as I retain my senses; and if my judgment fails me, it becomes a *misfortune*, not a *sin*.

The Author of Nature would not reward me for having been a *wit*: surely, then, he will not *damn* me even for being a *fool*. Nay, more; he will not *damn* me even for being wicked. Is not my own conscience a sufficient punishment for me?

Every virtuous action is accompanied with an inward satisfaction; every criminal action with chagrin and remorse. The mind acknowledges without shame its repugnance to such, or such propositions, although there is neither virtue nor vice in the belief or disbelief of them.

If grace be necessary to belief, let us wait till that grace be sent us from above.

God surely will not punish us for the want of that which it has not pleased him to bestow upon us. You tell me to ask this grace in prayer, but is not grace necessary to assist me in asking for *faith*, the want of which I cannot discover by the light of reason?

The true religion, interesting the whole human race at all times and in all situations, ought to be eternal, universal, and self-evident; whereas the religions pretended to be revealed, having none of these characteristics, are consequently demonstrated to be false.

The miracles of which only a few men are said to have been witnesses, are insufficient to prove the truth of a religion that ought to be believed by the whole world.

The pretended facts with which all revealed religion is supported are *ancient* and *wonderful*; that is to say, the most suspicious evidence possible, to prove things the most incredible; for to prove the truth of the Gospel by a miracle, is to prove an absurdity by a contradiction in nature.

Is it quite certain that the God of the Christians is the true God? It appears that the devil is a much more powerful being, seeing that the number of the damned is so much greater than that of the elect.

The Son of God died purposely to vanquish the devil. In order to gain his point he was reduced to the necessity of dying, and yet the devil has ever since had the ascendancy. How then are we benefitted by the death of the Son of God?

The God of the Christians, for an apple, punished all the human race, and killed his own son. This only proves that God is a father who makes a great deal to do about his apples, and cares very little for his children.

A God that killed God to appease God, was an expressive phrase of La Hontan; a phrase of itself sufficient to destroy the Christian religion; a phrase that will still retain its absurdity should one hundred folio volumes be written to prove it rational.

But what will God do to those who never heard of the death of his son? or who, having heard of him, still remained unbelievers? Will he punish the deaf for not hearing? Will he torment the weak headed for not understanding an inconceivable absurdity?

Why are the miracles of Jesus Christ true, and those of Esculapius, Pythagoras, and Appolonius false?

All the Jews at Jerusalem who saw the great miracles of Jesus, were doubtless converted? By no means. So far from having any belief in him, they put him to death. These Jews (whom a God himself came to convert) must have been a very stiff-necked race. We have in every country seen the people drawn aside and deceived by a single false miracle, and yet all the true miracles of Jesus made very little impression on the minds of the Jews. The miracle of their incredulity is no doubt wonderful. However, our priests reply, that this obstinacy of the Jews had been predicted as a chastisement from Heaven. In that case, why did God work so many miracles when the futility of them had been foreseen?

It is morally certain that Cæsar existed. The existence of Jesus is as certain as the existence of Cæsar. It is thence inferred that the resurrection of Jesus is also certain; but the conclusion is false: the existence

of Cæsar was not miraculous; wherefore should the existence of Jesus be thought so?

The religion of Jesus, announced by ignorant fanatics, (who were easily deceived, or easily deceived others,) made the first Christians. The same religion now preached by learned men, continues to make unbelievers.

You tell me that these ignorant apostles suffered death to prove the truth of what they preached to mankind; instead of which they proved only their own enthusiasm, or the chastisement of the people on whom they practised their hypocrisy. To suffer martyrdom in any cause proves nothing, except that our party is not the most powerful.

How did it happen that God permitted to be put to death those men that he sent purposely to convert the world? Would it not have been more in conformity with the divine attributes to change the hearts of the people?

As for the martyrs who suffered after the time of the apostles, they were not witnesses of the miracles of Jesus; they died to maintain that those who had instructed them in the Christian religion had neither deceived themselves nor wished to deceive others.

We attest what we have ourselves seen, or what we believe we have seen. When we attest what others have seen, we prove nothing except that we are willing to believe them on their words. The whole fabric of Christianity is built on the authority of those who had formerly an interest in establishing it, and who now have an interest in maintaining it.

It is pretended, that submission to legislative authority forbids all examination and reasoning; but do not the interested priests of all the religions on earth pretend to possess this authority? Does it not equally belong to the Bramins, the Telapoms, the Bonzes, the Molechs, as well as to the ministers of Christianity?

To be continued.

GABRIEL'S WING.

We extract the following story from the "Life of Joanna, Queen of Naples:"—One Sunday morning, when all the inhabitants of the neighboring hamlets had assembled at the church of Certaldo, Father Cipolla reminded them of their annual contributions to the poor of the *lord baron, St. Anthony*, which procure for their flocks and herds the peculiar protection of the blessed saint, and promised, as a special favor, to show to all the devout who would assemble before the church that day at the ninth hour, a feather of the angel Gabriel's wing, which he dropped in the chamber of the Virgin at the Annunciation. Among the auditors of Cipolla were two of his friends and jovial companions, who had often laughed at his public exhibitions of relics; and now wishing to see how he would extricate himself from the embarrassment, managed, whilst he dined and slept at the inn of the village, to take the feather out of his casket, and fill it with cinders. The precious relic had been recently drawn from the tail of a parrot, a bird little known in Tuscany, and which had never been heard of at Certaldo.

At the appointed hour the whole country assembled before the church. The unsuspecting friar began his verbose sermon, made his confession,

lighted two tapers, put off his hood, opened his vest, took out the casket, blessed it, and after a few words in praise of the angel Gabriel, opened it, and finding it filled with cinders, without the smallest change of countenance, raised his hands to heaven, thanked God, and closing it again, addressed the multitude. He then related to them a fictitious journey to Jerusalem, where the holy patriarch had shown him all his sacred treasury of relics, amongst others, the toupet of the seraphim that appeared to Saint Francis, a nail of a cherubim, some of the garments of the holy catholic faith, a few of the rays of the star which appeared to the magi in the East, a little of the sound of the bells of Solomon's Temple in a vial, that plume of the angelic wing he had already told them of, and a few of the coals with which the blessed martyr, St. Laurence, had been roasted. The benevolent patriarch, in reward of Cipolla's pilgrimage, gave him the sacred feather and cinders at parting. These he placed in separate caskets, lest the holy coals should soil the angelic plume; but the caskets were so alike, that he often mistook the one for the other, as in the present instance, by the express interposition of Providence. The feast of St. Laurence would arrive in two days; the blessed cinders were sent to rekindle the flame of devotion in their hearts. "To this end, therefore," continued he, "blessed children, reverently uncover your heads, and devoutly behold them; and whosoever shall be marked by them with the sign of the cross, shall be unhurt by fire for one year." As soon as he had sang a hymn in praise of St. Laurence, the credulous multitude crowded round him to gaze on the casket with stupid wonder, and to have their white shirts, vests, and veils marked with large black crosses, the friar telling them, the more he used of the cinders, the more they grew in the casket, as he had often proved. When all was over, the two roguish youths laughed with Cipolla at the trick they had played him, and praising his dexterity, gave him back the parrot's feather, which served him as well the following year.

SATAN VS. THE HUMAN RACE.

Among the works of Bartholus is found a curious tract, which had astonishing success at the period of its composition, and though more technically learned, was but an imitation of many of the poetical, but we must say, profane pleadings of the troubadours of Provence. The tract in question is a cause pleaded in form before Christ—Satan versus The Human Race—Cædæmon, the Satanic prothonotary, pleads on one side, and the Virgin Mary on the other. All the regular forms of law are observed. In fine, the judge pronounces the sentence in his tribunal at the bar of the court of justice, above the thrones of the angels in his celestial palace, after having examined all the citations, procurations, allegations, replies, exceptions, and rejoinders. The sentence is written and published by St. John the Evangelist, notary to the angelic court, as Cædæmon is to the infernal!—*Ginguene, Hist. Litteraire.*

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VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TRAVELS OF SCARMENTADO.

From the French of Voltaire.

I was born in the city of Candia, in 1600. My father was governor of the city, and I remember that a bad poet made bad verses in my praise, in which he proved my descent from Minos; but my father having been disgraced, my poet made more verses, according to which I was only sprung from Pasiphai and her lover.

At the age of 15 my father sent me to study at Rome. I set out full of hope, expecting to be taught all manner of truths; for till then I had learned nothing but lies, after the fashion of this world. Monsignor Profundo, my director, was a curious man, and one of the most formidable sages the world ever saw. He wanted me to learn the Categories of Aristotle, and tried hard to teach me some categories of another description; but I escaped, luckily. I saw processions, exorcisms, and some tricks. A very amiable young lady took it into her head to show me some kindness. She was tenderly loved by the reverend father Stiletto, and the reverend father Ratsbane, two young brothers of an order which does not now exist. She did me the favor to prefer me before them both, and I was very grateful; but I ran the risk of excommunication, for which I did not care, and of being stabbed or poisoned. I thought these more serious matters, and left Rome, mightily delighted with St. Peters.

Then I travelled through France. It was in the time of Louis the First. The first thing they asked me was, if I would like for my breakfast a small piece of the Marshal D'Ancre, whom the priests and the people had roasted, and whose flesh brought a very high price.

From thence I went into England. It was no better there. Some pious Catholics had resolved, for the good of the Church, to blow up into the air the king, the royal family, and the parliament, and to deliver England from the heretics. They showed me the place where queen Mary, of blessed memory, had caused more than 500 of her people to be burnt. An Irish priest assured me that this was an excellent thing; in the first place, because the roasted were all English, and secondly, because they had never used holy water, and would not believe in the hole of St. Patrick. But he was surprised that queen Mary was not yet canonized, and comforted himself with hoping that she would be, whenever the cardinal nephew should be at leisure.

From England I crossed over into Holland. When I arrived at the Hague, they had just chopped off the head of the venerable Barnevelt; a man who had rendered the most important services to his country. I asked what was his crime, and if he had committed treason against the republic? "He has done worse than that," replied a preacher in a black gown; "he dared to believe that men might be saved by good works as well as by faith. You must be sensible that, if such opinions should gain ground, a republic could not subsist, and that the severest laws must be put in force to suppress such horrible impiety." A profound politician of the country said to me, with a sigh, "Alas! this happy state of things will not last forever. It is but seldom that the people display so much zeal. In general they are too much infected with the abominable doctrine of toleration. I shudder to think of the consequences." As for me, until this fatal time of toleration should come, I made haste to escape, and embarked for Spain.

The court was at Seville; the gallions had arrived, and joy and abundance reigned throughout the whole of this beautiful country. "Here," said I, "I shall at last be happy." As I was walking, one day, I saw, at the end of a superb alley of orange and lemon trees, a sort of vast amphitheatre, surrounded with seats, covered with silks and embroidery. The king, the queen, the infants and the infantas were seated under a magnificent canopy. Opposite this august assemblage were another throne and canopy, higher and more richly decorated than theirs. I said to my companion, "Unless that throne be intended for God, I do not see who is to sit upon it." These indiscreet words were overheard by a grave Spaniard, and cost me dear in the end. I thought we were to see a tournament or a bull fight, when the grand inquisitor appeared, and took his place upon the throne, from which he pronounced a blessing upon the king and the people. Then came an army of monks, marching two and two; black, white, grey; some with shoes and some barefoot; some with long beards and some with no beards; some with pointed cowls and some without cowls; then the hangman; then, surrounded by a crowd of alguazils and grandees, about forty persons, clothed in mantles and high caps covered with painted flames and devils. These were Jews who would not be persuaded to renounce Moses, and Christians who had married their cousins, or who did not go on pilgrimage to the shrine of our Lady of Autocha, or who had not thought it advisable to give all their ready money to the wandering friars.

The priests and the people very devoutly chanted several beautiful hymns; after which they roasted the criminals before a slow fire, and the royal family appeared to be much edified. That night, just as I was going to bed, two officers of the inquisition came to pay me a visit. They embraced me tenderly, and, without speaking a word, conducted me very politely to a cool and comfortable dungeon, furnished with a straw bed and an exceedingly well made crucifix. There I staid six weeks, at the end of which the reverend father inquisitor ordered me to be brought before him. He received me with a warmth of kindness that was truly affecting, protesting that he regretted extremely the inconveniences of my lodging, but that all the cells were full, and hoped that I should be better accommodated when I came again. Finally, he

asked me very kindly, if I knew for what I was imprisoned. I said to the reverend father, that I supposed it was for my sins. "True, my dear son," said the reverend father, "but for what sin?" I racked my brains to no purpose: I could not conjecture what might be my crime. The charitable father gave me a hint—those indiscreet words of mine. I got off for a few hundred lashes and a fine of 30,000 reals. Before my liberation I was taken before the grand inquisitor to thank him for his mercy. He was one of the politest men in the world, and asked me very graciously how I liked my entertainment. I told him it was delightful, and then made all possible haste to run away, delightful as it was; but before I went I had time to read the memoirs of the famous bishop of Chiapa, who says that the jesuits burned, or drowned, or cut the throats of ten millions of infidels in America, to convert them. I expect the good bishop has exaggerated a little; but supposing there were but five millions, even then, it is a very pleasant history.

From Spain I thought of going into Turkey; but I resolved to take good care how I spoke of the ceremonies I might see. These Turks, said I to my companions, are unbaptized miscreants, and therefore they must be even more dangerous than the reverend fathers inquisitors. We must hold our tongues while we are among them.

To be continued.

SPIRITS AND DEMONS.

Continued.

The first inventors of these phantoms appear to have been the Egyptians, who believed that the spirits of the deceased always attended their bodies where they were deposited; and, therefore, they embalmed them with rich gums and spices to preserve their figure entire, and entombed them in stately mausoleums, with costly apartments for their souls to sojourn in. It was this opinion which gave rise to the building of the expensive and useless pyramids, to receive souls of a higher degree. From Egypt, these airy beings were transplanted into Greece; and thence to Rome. The Greek and Roman poets embellished their fictions with them; and the priests were not long in turning them to profit. Both priests and poets added to the number. They filled their woods, groves, rivers, rocks, houses, and the air itself with romantic deities. They had their demi-gods, satyrs, dryads, hemi-dryads, penates, lares, fauns, nymphs, and a thousand others. And when the general belief of the existence of such beings was well established, without doubt they were often seen and talked with:

For fear does things so like a witch,
'Tis hard to find out which is which.

They likewise animated almost every thing in Nature; and attributed even the passions and qualities of the mind to peculiar deities, who presided over, or directed and caused them. Mars inspired courage and magnanimity; Venus, love; Mercury, cunning; and Apollo and his muses, wisdom and poetic raptures. A good and evil genius attended every

man, and his virtues and vices were esteemed to be spirits. A wicked man had an evil spirit; a virtuous man, a good one; a wrangler had a spirit of contradiction; those who could not speak had a dumb spirit; a malicious man, a spirit of envy; and one who wanted veracity, a spirit of lying. Diseases, too, which were uncommon, and could not easily be accounted for—as apoplexies, epilepsies, and other fits and trances—were imputed to spirits and demons; and at last these delusions, which were only the fancies of poets, or the inventions of priests, became the real opinions and religion of the common people.

When the pagan world became Christian, the new converts carried all these phantoms with them, which the priests of “holy mother church” have since turned to more profitable account than turning them into verse. The heathen dryads and nymphs were changed into fairies; good and evil genii into conjurors, and black and white witches; while saints were made to supply the office of demi-gods. This adaptation of pagan demonology enabled the Christian priests to enrich themselves by charms, exorcisms, beads, relics, holy water, and invocation to the saints. There was scarcely a churchyard, or an old or empty house, which was not infested with these airy inhabitants; nor a man who had murdered himself, or who had been murdered by another, or had forgotten something in his lifetime, who did not appear to tell his own story; nor could be persuaded to quit his new abode until the *holy man*, for an adequate fee, had laid him in the Red Sea. We may be certain so gainful a trade was duly cherished by clerical juggles and impostures, and that every advantage was taken of surprising and unusual phenomena of Nature. By the help of uncommon voices and noises, phosphorus, magic lanterns, feats of legerdemain, collusion and confederacy, these prejudices were artfully kept up, and weak and enthusiastic people were made to believe, sometimes to see, and afterwards to publish to others, their visions, or whatever else their deceivers had occasion for.

Among the deceptive methods resorted to by the Spanish priesthood, to give effect to the phantasms which they have invented in order to govern mankind, they are in the practice of exhibiting pictures to their audiences towards the close of their sermons. One of these impostors, for instance, after having expatiated with as much fervor as possible on the torments of hell, gives a signal to one of the attendants to bring in the picture which exhibits some devils running sharp and red hot irons into sinners. The devils are painted most frightful, with horns, claws, and serpentine tails. The souls are symbolized by girls, because the word soul is of the feminine gender in Spanish, as well as in some other languages. The “reverend father” places a lighted torch before the picture, that it may be better seen by the spectators; and, with the most hideous and hypocritical vociferation, he denounces everlasting torments to the unrepenting, like those the painter has there represented; thus frightening instead of persuading sinners out of their wickedness.

In those countries where pictures are not resorted to, the clergy are not the less active in terrifying mankind into obedience. They represent God as pouring out unbounded vengeance to all eternity. The fanaticism of their hearers is fed with the idea of hell, where God, transformed into a ferocious executioner, as unjust as implacable, bathes himself in the

tears of his wretched creatures, and perpetuates their existence to render them everlastingly miserable. There, clothed with revenge, he mocks at the torments of sinners, and listens with rapture to the groans with which they make the brazen roof of their prisons resound, without the smallest hope of some distant abatement of their pains to give them an interval even of imaginary relief.

Nor are the supporters of the crescent less sanguinary or less zealous in depicting the horrors of the damned, than their worthy and charitable brethren of the cross. "Thosê (says the Alcoran) who do not believe shall be clothed in a garment of fire; boiling water shall be poured on their heads; their skins and their entrails shall be smitten with rods of iron: whenever they shall strive to escape from hell, to avoid its torments, they shall be again thrust into it, and the devils shall say unto them, 'taste the pain of burning.'"

I have been led to these remarks in consequence of recently perusing a pamphlet, entitled "An Essay on the Existence of the Devil, and his supposed influence on the human mind," by Richard Wright, unitarian missionary, Liverpool; in which this writer has so completely demolished "Satan's kingdom," that he must have roused the indignation of the orthodox, particularly the bishops and priests, who, without his Satanic majesty, would want the main prop of their religion. Mr. Wright has clearly demonstrated, that the popular notion of the devil is altogether unfounded; and as some of his remarks display a degree of intelligence beyond the generality of that possessed by men of his description, I have made a few extracts from the work, which I shall now take the liberty of quoting:

"The universe, (observes Mr. W.) comprehending the natural and moral worlds, is governed by fixed laws; to suppose, therefore, the intrusion and interference of an invisible evil being in the conduct of men, is an infraction of those laws, and a manifest absurdity. If the devil can secretly influence men, and through them human affairs, it must be in a way distinct from, and contrary to the laws of Nature; for they all work for good; but he works only for evil. Such secret, and I may say supernatural operations, for they are above the powers of Nature of which we have any knowledge, suppose the devil to be possessed of miraculous powers. If the devil can gain access to the minds of men in a secret way; can dispose them by his suggestions, and move them to action by his influence, without operating by the laws of Nature, then he can operate miraculously; to suppose which is a gross error and absurdity. If it be said he operates by the laws of Nature, then he must, in some sense, possess the government of Nature; and, if so, God either works by him as an agent, or he guides Nature independent of God. If the former, he is God's servant; if the latter, how is God the governor of all things? How are we to reconcile with the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, his continuing in existence, and in the possession of such wonderful powers, a being who is only evil, and will ever remain so; who always acts in opposition to him; continually stirs up rebellion against him; who is the author of all evil, and who neither does, nor ever will do, any thing but mischief in the creation? He must either exist in dependence on, and derive his extraordinary powers from God, or he must exist in-

dependent of him, and possess his power underived. If his existence be independent, and he possess an underived power, he must himself be a God; but if he be dependent, and his power derived, the question will arise, how can God communicate such extraordinary powers, but for useful purposes? Notions so repugnant to reason, and attended with such insuperable difficulties, ought not to be believed without the clearest evidence.

To be continued.

APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS.

Continued from No. 26, Vol. 1.

Peter.—If Simon behold not the power of Christ, our Jesus Christ, he will not believe that he himself is not the Christ.

Simon.—Most sacred emperor, be careful of believing them, for these are they who are circumcised, and who practise circumcision.

Paul.—On our part, before we knew the truth, we observed the circumcision of the flesh; but, since the truth hath been revealed to us, it is the circumcision of the heart with which we are circumcised, and with which we circumcise.

Peter (to Simon.)—If circumcision be evil, why art thou circumcised?

Nero.—Is Simon then also circumcised?

Peter.—He could not otherwise have deceived souls, if he had not put on the semblance of being a Jew, and had not pretended to teach the Law of God.

Nero.—Thou, Simon, as I perceive, art actuated by envy, and that is the reason why thou troublest them. For I see there is a great strife between thee and their Christ, and I fear lest thou shouldst be convinced by them, and shouldst appear to be consumed with great plagues.

Simon.—Art thou seduced, O emperor?

Nero.—What meanest thou? "Art thou seduced?" I see evidently thou art the adversary of Peter and Paul, and of their master.

Paul.—He who taught Peter hath instructed me by revelation. But since he accuses us of being circumcised, let him now say why he is himself circumcised?

Simon.—Why questionest thou me of that?

Paul.—Because of thy interrogating us.

Nero.—Why fearest thou to answer them?

Simon.—I am myself circumcised, because circumcision was commanded of God at the time I received it.

Paul.—Hast thou heard, O emperor, what Simon hath said? If then circumcision be good, why hast thou betrayed and caused to be killed hastily those who are circumcised?

Nero.—But I think not well of you.

Peter and Paul.—Whether thou thinkest good or evil of us is of no consequence, for of necessity the will of our master must be fulfilled.

Nero.—And what if I will it not?

Peter.—It is not that thou wilt, but what he hath promised.

Simon.—Good emperor, these men have abused thy clemency, and yet thou hast countenanced them.

Nero.—Thou hast not yet satisfied me on thy own account.

Simon.—I wonder, after having displayed so great works, thou shouldst yet doubt.

Nero.—I neither believe nor disbelieve either of you; but answer forthwith to the question put to you.

Simon.—I answer nothing at present.

Nero.—Thou sayest *that* in order to deceive; and if I have not power to constrain thee myself, God, who is almighty, will do it.

Simon.—I will answer thee no more.

Nero.—And I will no longer put confidence in thee, for, as I perceive, thou art a deceiver in every thing. But to what purpose do we continue this discourse. Ye have all three convinced me of the indecision of your minds, and ye have caused in me so great uncertainty respecting all matters, that I know not whom to believe.

Peter.—As for me, I am a Jew by nation, and I preach all those things I have learnt from my master, to the end that ye might believe there is a God the Father, invisible, incomprehensible, and infinite; and one Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Creator of all things. We proclaim to all men him who hath made heaven and earth, the sea and all things therein; who is truly King, and his reign shall be without end.

Paul.—That which he hath said I likewise avow; since there is no salvation in any other, but in Jesus Christ alone.

Nero.—Who is the King Christ?

Paul.—The Saviour of all nations.

Simon.—I am he of whom you speak; and know, Peter and Paul, that it shall not be as ye desire, that I should find you worthy of martyrdom.

Peter and Paul.—May that we desire be granted, and mayest thou, Simon Magus, who art full of bitterness, never know good, because, in all thou sayest, thou liest.

Simon.—Hear me, Cæsar Nero, to the end thou mayst know that these men are impostors, and that it is I who have been sent from heaven. The day after the morrow I will ascend into heaven, and I will make them blessed who believe in me; and I will show my wrath against those who have dared deny me.

Peter and Paul.—God hath preordained us for his glory, but thou art now instigated by the devil, and thou goest quickly into torments.

To be continued.

ADAM.

[Translated from Gruber's New German Encyclopedia.]

Continued from No. 26, Vol. 1.

That our Mythus did not spring from Hebrew ground, and is not to be considered as the work of a Hebrew sage, but that it is founded on ideas and traditions, which the Hebrews brought from eastern Asia, is clear, partly from certain traits of the narrative itself, partly from the concurring theories of the other oriental religions. To the former belongs the

aprons of fig leaves, and the idea of the principal rivers rising from one source, suggested by *India*; to the latter, the *tree of life* and the seducing serpent, which both play a conspicuous part in the ancient Persian and Indian religions. The Persians have their *Hom*, the tree of immortality, which revives the dead at the resurrection. The Indians have the paradisiacal tree, *Parajati*, the fruit of which frightens away *Ambert* (death,) and the paradisiacal tree *kalpaurksham*, which bears meat and drink for the immortals. Add to this, that our *Mythus*, though in a measure adapted to the Hebrew theology, yet stands in many respects isolated from the ideas of the Old Testament. Even the appellation "*Jehovah Elohim*," is nowhere else to be found. Of the oriental creeds, which run parallel with our *Mythus*, we will mention only one, the *Persian of Zendavesta*: The first parents, *Meshia* and *Meshiane*, were pure and innocent, and heaven was to be their portion if they remained pure in words and deeds. So they remained for a while, and acknowledged *Ormuyd* as the only creator of things; but soon after a bad spirit blinded them so that they adored *Ariman* (the bad principle.) The spirit brought them fruits, of which the woman ate first, and then also the man. They became corrupt, and of their former attributes hardly any remained. So they became sinners (*Darwands*) and dressed themselves in skins and invented iron, but remained ungrateful to God. *Ariman*, as well as the other bad spirits, appear frequently under the form of serpents. 2d. The *religion of Lama* says, "The first inhabitants of the earth existed in a state of happiness and innocence; their days were greatly prolonged by a tree, the fruits of which were inestimable, incorruptible and divine. But soon their happiness ceased. A plant, sweet as honey, sprang from the earth, of which a glutton tasted, and persuaded the others to eat. Voluptuousness arose, and with it *shame*, and the custom of dressing with palm leaves. 3d. According to the *Banians* in India, the highest deity commanded the earth to produce a man from her lap. She obeyed. First appeared the head, then gradually the rest of the body, into which God blew life and motion. Then God gave him a wife, &c. In the Indian *Ezur Vedom* the first man's name was *Adimo*. The great similarity of these oriental creeds with our *Mythus* cannot be accidental. They all derive the existence of evil from human avidity and sensuality. The serpent has been the symbol of cunning, malice, and seduction through all antiquity. The stern monotheism of the Mosaic religion knew nothing of demons. This doctrine, the Jews learned from the Assyrians, and of course the latter Rabbi made a demon of the serpent, which opinion has remained prevalent among Christian interpreters.

Note of the Translator.

This doctrine of the *Encyclopedia* has been taught for at least forty years, in the most celebrated reformed universities of continental Europe. The *first* cosmogony, of which it speaks, is from chap. i. 1, to chap. ii. 4; the *second*, or the *Mythus* inserted by the compiler of *Genesis*, goes from chap. ii. 4, to chap. ii. 24. They are evidently two separate cosmogonies. The diction of the second has many Chaldean roots, and is evidently *metric*: not so the rest. *Jehovah Elohim* should be translated

Lord of Gods, the highest of the Gods; In the genuine Hebrew, *Jehovah* is *Juk*, for the punctuations are often the arbitrary work of the later Rabbi, who, by punctuation, added the vowels e, o, and a, to make it *Jehovah*, which thus came to signify J (Je,) hava, (to be, to live.) At the return of the Jews from the Assyrian captivity, the Hebrew tongue, to the mass of the people, was entirely lost. They spoke nothing but Syriac: and even the Rabbi understood the ancient Hebrew very imperfectly. The name *Juk* must have been vastly ancient, for already with *Homer*, *Jupiter* (pater Ju) is the most ancient God of Gods. The word *Elohim*, is Syriac, and is the plural of *Eloah* or *Elo* (a God.). "Eli, Eli, lama asaphani," cried Jesus on the cross, in Syriac, the language in which he preached and conversed. *Elo, El, Bell, Baal*, and the *Allah* of the present Arabs and Turks, are all of the same root. *Bereshid parah Elohim*, &c. the first words of Genesis, will bear two different translations, besides that which is current in our translations from the Septuagint: 1st. *Bereshid* (a noun proper) made the gods, &c. 2d. In the beginning the gods created the world, &c. But for that it should read: *Elohim parah*, not *parah Elohim*; for the position of the word is all important in so imperfect a language as the Hebrew. Thus, in *Ben David*, David stands in the genitive, but in *David Ben*, both words are in the nominative. The Hebrew wants declensions. The modern translation, *God created* the world, cannot be right; for firstly, it sins against the position, and secondly, *Elohim* is the plural of *Eloah*, and must be translated *Gods*. From which, I conclude, that both cosmogonies are of Assyrian origin, and the *Mosaic* one is lost. In so long and complete a slavery as the Jews suffered in Assyria, the writings of *Moses*, as *Nehe-miah* says, and may readily be believed, were lost. Some of the best heads among them, (*Ezra*) at the return to Palestine, collected what could yet be found scattered in scraps here and there, and to give the work a head, added those Assyrian cosmogonies to their collection. This will explain the various incongruous intermixture of religious and civil laws, and the frequent repetitions in the Pentateuch. If *Elohim* is translated *Gods*, it will add another cogent argument against those cosmogonies being of Hebrew origin; and will explain the otherwise unintelligible passages, "God created man after his *own image, likeness*;" the heathen gods being represented as men, only superior in form and mind. So also the passage of "taking a walk in the garden in the cool of the evening," for the heathen gods enjoyed themselves like mortal men; and the words "Behold, man has become as one of us." This us has puzzled the Christian interpreters very much; till at last they agreed it means the *Trinity*. How this can be, when *Moses* cannot possibly be even dreamed to have known of such a theory, as a distinct divine personality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I do not pretend to determine. This doctrine was first taught long after Jesus's death. The passage of the "three witnesses in heaven," is not contained in *one of the eighty* original manuscripts of the Greek Testament, and is consequently spurious. See Gibbon's Decl. and Fall of the Rom. Emp. vol. 4, page 407—408.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH.

Continued.

38. It is a fact, that there is nothing which has tended so much to degrade the character of God as the futile attempts of Moses to give human passions, forms, and features to the person of God.

39. It is a fact, that God is without any form, likeness, or image, that can be imagined by man. He is as incomprehensible as he is indescribable; and bears no more resemblance to man than the latter does to a mountain.

40. It is a fact, that Moses informs you, that God was unable to finish this little ball of earth in less than *five days* of hard labour. And yet, with his usual inconsistency, he afterwards informs you that the same God actually created millions of worlds in one day only! And not only millions of worlds in one day, but all of them so many thousand times larger than this globe! So that Moses himself has proved, that if it took his God five days to build this world, it was impossible for him to create the sun, moon, and stars, or all the rest of the universe, in one day!

41. It is a fact, that Moses frequently relates the same story twice, but never twice alike; and that is an infallible sign of a dealer in fiction. Even in the greatest and most terrifying of all his "miracles," he contradicts himself: For in Exodus he informs you that the law was given on Mount Sinai; but when he scribbled his second account, about forty years after, he declares it was at Mount Horeb! See Deuteronomy. What a list of pretended facts have we already collected and exposed, in reviewing the first chapter of Genesis only! And those who cannot perceive them with us must be lost to every hope of regeneration, and possess souls hermetically sealed against conviction.

42. It is a fact, that no man hath ever seen or spoken to God, or God to him, since the creation.

43. It is a fact, that the ancient Jews, for many ages, had only *one* copy of their law for the whole nation.

44. It is a fact, that that copy was always under the sole custody of their interested leader or chief, who could write in and erase with perfect impunity whatever he pleased, without even a probability of being detected. For

45. It is a fact, that out of the whole multitude who followed Moses, he and Aaron were the only two who could read or write. Who, then, could detect the fictions which were recorded by Moses and Aaron?

46. It is a fact, that there is no evidence that any other persons except Moses, Aaron, and the judges could read or write, for many ages; and all these were too much interested to be received as impartial witnesses. You may as well expect to find our priests acknowledge themselves hypocrites.

47. It is a fact, that the Jews not only lost their Bible during the Babylonish captivity, but they even lost their own Hebrew language; and what is now called the Hebrew is, in fact, the Chaldaic or Samaritan. This, at least, is the opinion of a majority of the ablest writers on that subject.

48. It is a fact, that the Jewish nation did not produce a single author, or writer, after their long captivity, who used their former language. For they all adopted the language of their late masters, the Chaldaic, or that of the Greek. And yet the Jewish and Christian priests have the impudence to pretend that the Old Testament has been handed down unimpaired to us!

49. It is a fact, that though dead languages may be rendered permanent by means of grammars and lexicons, still no living language can be made equally stable, without the aid of such extraordinary auxiliaries.

50. It is a fact, that as grammars and lexicons are a mere modern invention, it is manifestly impossible that the Hebrew language could continue permanent for more than a very few ages.

51. It is a fact, that every language has been subject to more or less changes; and as an evidence, we refer to that of the English, which, in the course of a few generations, has not only changed its former orthography and idiom, but even its ancient characters are changed and forgotten.

52. It is a fact, that there is every rational reason for believing that the Hebrew language was not the primitive language of man; and that the Sanscrit is.

53. It is a fact, that we have proved in our "Biblical Challenge" that there is no room for doubting, that all the ancient oriental nations, who occupied those countries from Egypt to Syria, and beyond, all used one and the same language; and also that Egypt was the mother or parent of all those languages. For, as she was the only great and powerful kingdom known in those days, it is evident that she is the eldest likewise: and of course the mother of the Egyptian, Hebrew, Phenician, Arabic, and Chaldaic dialects.

54. It is a fact, that the experiment of ascertaining whether it is possible for a single family of foreign slaves to preserve their language, when surrounded entirely by that of their masters, has been tried a thousand times in our slave states; and on a greater number of souls than composed Jacob's family. But the result has been invariably the loss of the language of the slaves in the course of a few generations. And after four hundred years of captivity their language would be totally lost; and a corrupt dialect of their masters must of necessity have been adopted in place of it.

55. It is a fact, that all the writers of the Old Testament were *poets*, and that that volume was written in blank verse. It is necessary, then, to remind the impartial reader, that all poets were licensed dealers in fictions; and that alone will account for that medley of truth and fiction with which that volume abounds.

56. It is a fact, that the human mind in every age, nation, and religion, has been enslaved either by a mercenary priesthood, or by the early planting of their religious prejudices in the passive and tender minds of our youth.

57. It is a fact, that not one out of a thousand ever after acquires sufficient firmness or strength of mind to examine the rotten foundation on which those prejudices rest for their support.

58. It is a fact, that the Egyptians taught two systems of religion: one calculated for the king, priests, and foreign philosophers; and the other for the people.

To be continued.

DEATH BED REPENTANCE.

Mr. Editor—A gentleman, who, by the way, was not considered by presbyterians to be very orthodox in his religious opinions, being very sick, and not like to survive, was called upon by the parson of the parish, and, after the usual salutation, the parson asked him if he had made his peace with God? To which he replied, "that he had never had any difference with him; and, not having been at war, no formal peace was required." The gentleman alluded to was well known to the writer of this communication. He resided in Great Barrington, Massachusetts; and upon this occasion gave, probably, the best answer to the question, so often asked of persons in his condition, that has ever been given. It is ridiculous to talk of making peace with God on a death bed. The tenor of a man's life must determine his future condition, and not any expressions of sorrow for past conduct at the hour of dissolution. A contrary doctrine has a tendency to promote crime, by leading people to suppose that, if, at the approach of death, they acknowledge an unfeigned belief in the atoning efficacy of the blood of Christ, and sincerely repent of their sins, they will be forgiven *instantly*. Witness the confident assurance of criminals under the gallows. It is both impolitic and cruel thus to deceive mankind. Are the stains of a wicked life to be washed away by the blood of an innocent person? It is high time to relinquish such abominable nonsense.

A. B.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 4, 1827.

The Antidote.—This paper, as reckless of character as it is of principle, persists in its course of slander and misrepresentation. In our last we exposed one of its frequent departures from truth, so common with those who are under the influence of fanaticism, or who aim, by means of deception, at perpetuating the reign of priestcraft. But, so far from feeling any repugnance on account of these tergiversations, the editors of the *Antidote* are becoming more and more practised in turpitude, and in endeavoring to make up for their lack of argument by the boldness and effrontery of their assertions. Not content with falsely charging us with contradictions ourselves, they now pretend that the account given by Mr. Shultz, in a late number of the *Correspondent*, of the origin of the *Old Testament*, or Jewish books, is different from that which we had previously published. They say that we attributed the originating of these books to the famous Council of Nice; whereas Mr. S. asserts that they were fabricated by Hilkiah or Ezra. Nothing can

be more unfounded than this statement; and the conductors of the *Antidote* knew perfectly well that they were recording a falsehood when they committed it to paper. They *knew* that in the History given in the *Correspondent*, of the Council of Nice, it was the gospels, and such books only as compose the *New Testament*, that were there mentioned as having received the sanction of that council. They also *knew* that Mr. S. was *not* alluding to the gospels, or New Testament, but was expressly speaking of the "*Jewish Bible*," or "*Old Testament*, which, he said, was fabricated either by Ezra or Hilkiah, the Jewish priests.

Although, when the *Antidote* made its appearance, we anticipated a great deal of abuse, and abundance of false reasoning and sophistry, because we were aware that these are the only weapons resorted to by bigotry and fanaticism; yet we scarcely expected, after so much boasting as appeared in its early numbers, about sincerity, honesty, and liberality, that its editors would have been so shameless, so destitute of principle, and so profligate, as wilfully to pervert the truth. We were desirous to enter the lists with honorable antagonists, and every way disposed to make allowances for the prejudices arising from education. But, as we cannot consider them in that light, and have the best reasons for believing that their views are directly opposed to their professions, we can only regard them as objects of pity until they return to reason, which is of infinitely more importance than all the frenzy of all the fanatics that ever existed on the earth.

Institution of Practical Education.—We frequently visit this excellent seminary, under the superintendence of Mr. Robt. L. Jennings; and every visit affords us additional reasons for believing, that no mode of teaching, except the one he has adopted, is calculated to give the human mind a proper direction, and to form the character as it ought to be formed. The aptness with which the children receive instruction, their increasing inquiries after knowledge, and the astonishing progress which they have made in little more than two months, all demonstrate the correctness of our statement. But it is necessary to witness this, in order to form a just idea of the superiority of the system. The moderate terms also (only \$130 per annum) on which boarders are admitted, and instructed in all the useful branches, renders this institution an object of great importance in a pecuniary point of view, and cannot fail to recommend it to the attention of all, particularly to those at a distance, who are desirous of conferring on their offspring a liberal education. From our own personal observation, we are satisfied that parents may rely on their children being properly and kindly treated.

Ecce Homo!—This work (complete) is now on sale at the office of the Correspondent, corner of Vesey street and Broadway, and the bookstore corner of Reed and Greenwich streets; price 75 cents, in boards. A liberal deduction will be given on quantities purchased for distribution.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGION, BY M. DIDEROT.

Concluded.

It is the education of youth which makes a Christian believe in Christ, a Turk in Mahomet, and an Indian in the incarnations of the Vestnou. It is the education of youth which makes the Siamese believe the wonders that are told him about Sommonocodom.

Faith, in every country, is only a blind deference to the sentiments of the priests, who are always infallible where they are sufficiently powerful.

Our priests are unceasingly talking to us of the weakness and errors of the human mind ; but is the mind of a priest more infallible than mine ? Is his understanding less subject to error than that of an unbeliever ? May not his passions and interests deceive him in the same way that others are deceived ?

We no sooner refuse to believe on the bare word of a priest, than he endeavors to frighten us ; but the terror he excites in us is not a convincing argument, neither can fear be a motive of credibility. *Believe, or you will be damned.* This is the strongest argument in theology.

But is it certain that I shall be damned for not believing what appeared to me incredible ? Divines have long been asked to reconcile the dogma of eternal punishment with that of infinite mercy ; but this they will not meddle with ; yet still they persist in representing our heavenly Father as a tyrant, to whom no father of a family would wish to have any resemblance.

Why would you punish a guilty wretch when no utility can arise from his punishment. What good results to mankind, or to the Deity himself, from the punishment of the millions of unfortunate beings who have already been damned ?

The dogma of eternal punishment is the offspring of folly, of atrocity, and of blasphemy. If God will punish eternally, what proportion exists between the offence and the chastisement ? If he punish for his own satisfaction, he becomes a monster of barbarity. If he punish to correct others, his rigor is useless for those who are not witnesses of it.

But further : Why is this God so wrathful ? Can man, either living or dead, tarnish his glory, and disturb his repose and felicity ? If God be offended at sin, it is because he *wills* to be offended. If God will eternally punish sin, it is because he *wills* that sin shall eternally be committed.

It is pretended that God will burn the wicked man (who can do nothing against him) in a fire that shall endure for ever ; yet should we not regard as culpable any father who should plan the easiest death imaginable for his son, though that son had compromised his honor, his fortune, or even his life ?

God the Father, judges mankind deserving his eternal vengeance ; God the Son, judges them worthy of his infinite mercy ; the Holy Ghost remains neutral. How can we reconcile this verbiage with the unity of the will of God ?

All the evils that could possibly be committed, would only merit an infinite punishment; yet, in order that we may always be terrified at the idea of Deity, the priests have made *man* sufficiently powerful to offend the Author of Nature to all eternity!

All the evil which man is capable of committing is not all the evil that possibly might be committed. How can a finite being, a worm of earth, offend the infinite being who created him, or disturb the powers which regulate the universe?

I should, without hesitation, believe any respectable individual who might bring me the intelligence of an army having obtained a victory over its opponent, &c.; but should the whole population of Paris assure me that a dead man rose from his grave, I would not believe a word of it. When we find that a historian has imposed upon us, or that a whole nation has been deceived, we must not take these for prodigies.

A single demonstration is more convincing than fifty unconnected facts. Pontiff of Mahomet! cause the lame man to walk, the dumb to speak, the blind to see, or the dead to rise from their graves, and to thy great astonishment my faith shall not be shaken. Wouldst thou have me to become thy proselyte, lay aside these pranks, and let us reason together. I have more dependence on my judgment than I have on my eyes.

How canst thou believe that God requires to be worshipped? Weak mortal! What need has the Deity of thy homage? Dost thou think that thou canst add any thing to his happiness or to his glory? Thou mayst honor thyself by raising thy thoughts to the Great Author of thy being, but thou canst do nothing for him; he is too much above thy insignificance. Always bear in mind, that if any kind of worship be more acceptable to him than the rest, it must be that which proceeds from an honest heart. What matter then in what manner thou expressest thy sentiments? Does he not read them in thy mind? What matters it in what garments, in what attitude, in what language thou addressest him in prayer? Is he like those kings of the earth who reject the petition of their subjects, because they have been ignorant of, or disregarded some little formality? Pull not down the Almighty to thy own littleness, but believe that if one worship were more agreeable to him than another, he would have made it known to the whole world. Believe that he receives with the same goodness the wishes of the Mussulman, the Catholic, and the Indian; that he hears with the same kindness the prayers of the savage, who addresses him from the midst of a forest, as those of a pontiff, who wears the tiara.

Nothing could be better adapted to overthrow morality and destroy it altogether, than to couple it with religion; neither could any thing be more pernicious than to make men believe that they offended God when they injured themselves or their fellow creatures; and hence arose the necessity of obtaining God's favor, without any regard to the duties they owe to their brethren.

Reason tells us, that when we commit crimes, it is men, and not God, that we injure; and common sense tells us, that we injure ourselves when we give way to disorderly passions. The Christian religion teaches us to imitate a God who is cruel, insidious, jealous, and implacable in his

wrath. Christians! with such a model before you, what will be your morality? Can the God of Moses, of Joshua, and of David, be the God of an honest man?

A religion is dangerous when it confounds our ideas of morality. A religion is false when it destroys the perfections of the Deity. A religion is detestable, when it substitutes for its worship a vindictive dæmon instead of a beneficent God.

Christians! in obeying your gospels to the letter, you will be neither citizens, husbands, fathers, friends, nor faithful subjects. You will be pilgrims on earth—strangers in your own country—fierce enemies to yourselves, and your brethren—and your groans even will not leave you the hope of ever being happy.

Modern Credulity.—In the course of the day, the president of the convent (at Damascus) had been endeavoring to persuade me that the age of miracles was not past, and that these divine agents of conversion were as necessary to be exhibited to mankind in the present day, as at any former period. In illustration of his position, he brought to me a small modern engraving, representing the late Pope Pius VII. lifted up from earth, in divine ecstasy, and there suspended in the air by divine power, while officiating at high mass in his pontifical robes before the altar, on the day of Pentecost, in the year 1811. It is not stated, in the inscription at the foot of engraving, at what particular place this pretended event took place; but Rome is to be inferred, as the Pope seldom, if ever, officiates in his sacred functions except in that city. Much as I had seen of religious imposture and religious credulity in Palestine, I had seen nothing so barefaced and palpable as this. The fact of engraving and publishing such a print in Europe at the present day, sufficiently evinces how far priestly impudence will go in attempting to pass off the grossest delusions on mankind, for it is evident that the originator of such a publication could not have been ignorant of the fraud; and the veneration with which it is received and preserved among those for whose edification it is professedly intended, is a strong proof of the credulity of ignorance.—*Buckingham's Travels.*

Mahometan Parable.—A grand signor caused his vizier's arm to be cut off, and proclaimed that the arm should be thrown up, and whoever caught it falling should succeed in the vizier's place; but upon terms to be served the same sauce at a year's end. When the crowd was come together to catch this arm, one man, more diligent and dexterous than the rest, caught it. So he was vizier: and, at the year's end, his right arm was cut off, and thrown up as before; and he himself, with his left arm, caught it again; and after his second year, his left arm was cut off and thrown up, and he caught it with his mouth. This is to show what men will suffer to gain a pre-eminence over others.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Mr. Editor—The many pious frauds and clerical impositions that are practised upon the laity of our country have been too long, from false delicacy, denied an exposure by the press. People seem to have an idea that clergymen are a superior order of beings, and look up to them with the most respectful reverence and awe. To speak irreverently of them, or call in question their licentiousness, is by many esteemed a matter of great impiety. Hence they have acquired that ascendancy, secure from attack, which emboldens them in imposition; and they are often guilty of the most gross and open licentiousness.

But there is one species of traffic in particular, in which they are deeply engaged, that has ever but too well succeeded. I allude to the zeal with which they preach up the necessity of encouraging foreign missions; and the smooth tongued oratory they employ to work up the feelings of their misguided followers, to draw from them a part of their surplus funds to defray the expenses of a Quixotic attempt to Christianize the *heathen*—as those people are termed who have fortunately never embraced Christianity. This might be more tolerable did they set the example themselves, or were it contributed by those who can afford it. But such is not the case. It is wrested from the widow and orphan. The last shilling is demanded of the hand of honest industry, that has been saved from their hard labors to rock the cradle of declining life, or give comfort to the bed of sickness. The man clad in black—fit emblem of his heart—with all the persuasion and craft characteristic of the priestly fry, leaves no scheme unused to promote the cause; and woe to him who is so unfortunate as to fall within their meshes! Actuated by a spirit rather demoniac than otherwise, a few of the affluent act in concert with the priests, and, with consciences seared against every throb of compunction, succeed in draining the last farthing from the ignorant and credulous.

Among the other ingenious methods that are adopted to wheedle the indigent and unsuspecting out of their earnings, to promote this all important cause, that of establishing periodicals stands conspicuous. These are got up under the auspices of some society, with the avowed object of appropriating the net profits to the spread of the gospel; i. e. to glut the coffers of the priesthood; and, under the imposing protestation of unwearied "zeal in the cause of Zion," meet with ready patronage. One of these papers, elated with the success it had met, lately published a let-

ter from an agent, as unrivalled in impudence as in nonsense. To show the zeal with which he served his master in rifling the poor, he says, "When they have been *unable* to take it individually, I have advised them to unite and take it in companies. Some of them have, in their anxiety to promote the good cause in which they are engaged, deprived themselves of the actual necessities of life. Precious souls! *Of such is the kingdom of heaven composed!*"

In another of these godly folios, a donation from a "WORTHY but POOR MAN" of twenty-five dollars is acknowledged; stating that the donor had deprived himself and family of shoes six months, besides denying them the use of *sugar* and *molasses* the same period, to raise the donation. "What a worthy example of piety! (the editor remarks;) what zeal in a good cause! Lovers of the Redeemer, go and do likewise." Did this need any comment, it would be that "the donor should be put in the house of correction, and he who received the money should be put in the stocks."

I was utterly astonished, on looking over the *Missionary Herald*, a monthly publication, devoted to this same "good cause," at the enormous sums that are accumulated and squandered away on these visionary missions. The donations received in four months, as reported in the four numbers before me, amount to *twenty-nine thousand dollars!* What an unconscionable sum to lavish upon a horde of speculating hypocrites, under the pretence of Christianizing the *heathen!* O ye tract scattering gentry!—ye who sally forth to teach the Indian the "narrow way" to the gate of your heaven!—ye who are ever crying "Remove not the old landmark"—when will ye give over your vain endeavors to "pull down a religion that has stood the test of ages"—that has been handed down to them by their forefathers from time immemorial, to substitute your own, which, compared with it, is but of yesterday? Ye, I say, who so kindly and *charitably* assume the task of leading benighted pagans heavenward!—of making them familiar with all the intricacies, arts, and mysteries of your profound and *sublime* religion!—ye who, from disinclination to the common laborious vocations of life, resort to the method of obtaining a livelihood by teaching your "divine law," and peddling your pious stories in that part of the world that has fortunately never been made acquainted with Christianity and its attendant evils!—point out a single instance, after the expenditure of all these enormous sums, where in the *heathen* have been benefited. Tell us that the heathen have changed the worship of their 330,000,000 gods, as taught them by their fathers, for the worship of your 3 gods; or that their condition is more happy at this moment than it was before their soil was impressed by your footsteps; that they have advanced in virtue, or are less familiar with those crimes—those open violations of morality that marked them as a nation! No: rather a contrary result has attended your Christianizing scheme.

But, Mr. Editor, I am trespassing upon your pages. I rejoice, however, that a paper is at length established, through the medium of which we can fully and freely express our dissent to these unwarrantable missionary expeditions, as well as the many other impositions that are got up at the instigations of the priesthood. It is to be hoped that the system of

sending a band of mercenaries to dupe the ignorant natives of Asia will be put down, and that an enlightened and intelligent people will frown indignantly upon every attempt to deceive them, and to draw from their pockets that which they are in humanity bound to appropriate to those who need it at home, to the exclusion of a race of theological speculators, seeking nothing at heart but personal aggrandizement. J. M.

Albany, July, 1827.

HISTORY OF SAMUEL.

Continued from page 8.

Saul and his servant proceed to the city; they meet women and girls coming to the fountain for water; they ask if the seer is there; they answer he is there, but he is just going to sacrifice on the high place; by quickening your pace you will find him before he goes to eat, for he has invited every body. They go in, and soon find Samuel, who meets them on his way to the high place; but God had the day before revealed to Samuel the arrival of Saul, by saying, "Tomorrow I will send you a man of Benjamin, whom you will anoint chief of my people." Samuel having looked at Saul, God said to him, "Behold the man!" Saul approached Samuel, and asked, "Show me where the seer lives?" Samuel replied, "I am he; come up with me to the high place; you shall eat with me to-day; tomorrow I will send you away, after you have told me all that is in your heart. As to the stray asses, take no more trouble; they are found. But all that there is good or better in Israel, to whom shall it be if not to you, and to the house of your father?" Saul, astonished, answered, "Am not I a Benjamite, the least tribe of Israel, and smallest family of the tribe? Why do you talk thus to me?" And Samuel made Saul and his servant come into his dining hall, where were about thirty guests; and Samuel said to the cook, "Give to these two strangers the dish which I told you to set apart;" and the cook gave him a whole shoulder of mutton. Then, having returned to the city, Samuel talked with Saul on the top of the house all night, and at the break of day said to him, "Depart;" and as they descended from the city he said to him, "Send your servant on before; but you remain behind, and I will show you the word of the Lord."

What are we to think of all this? Can we believe that it was by accident that the asses of Kish disappeared, and that Saul was led to the house of Samuel? Let those believe this who have faith in seers, fortune-tellers, the gods of the heathen, and a particular providence in finding lost asses; but, to those who have not lost or abjured their senses, it is clear that all this is a crafty manoeuvre, secretly contrived to attain a particular object. We cannot doubt that Samuel, a man so acquainted throughout Israel, had already known the person of Saul. He thought his character suited to his end; but, to be assured precisely of it, it was necessary to talk with him. He could not decently go to see him; he must send for him. He says to a devotee, (as men of that cast always had them,) "God wishes to prove his servant Kish; go, take away his asses, and lead them to such a place." The man obeys. Behold Saul

seeking them. He does not find them. In such a case, how many Swiss, Bavarian, Tyrolese, Breton, Vendean peasants would go to see the fortuneteller? But nothing was easier to this divine than to bribe people on the route which Saul was to take. It was foreseen by Samuel. He projected the sacrifice and the feast after this calculation. The portion set apart for an absent guest proves it. When he had Saul in his house, he employed the evening to sound him in every way: he prepared him for his new part; finally, he sends off the servant, and mysteriously, without witness, performs the grand, the important ceremony of pouring a little oil on his head; [mark well the circumstance; he anoints him without witness, in secret, for a public effect;] he kisses him, says the text; he tells him, that, from this moment, God has consecrated him unchangeable, irremovable king of Israel.

At this stage of their intimacy, it is evident their confidence was complete. Saul knew and accepted the propositions and conditions of Samuel. He, who had measured the mind of his pupil, in order to subjugate him more and more, uttered several predictions to be accomplished immediately. "If returning home (says he) you will meet, at such a place, two men, who will tell you, that your father has found his asses; further on, you will find three men going to Beitel; they will say to you such things; they will make you such a present. Again, at the hill of the Philistines, you will find a procession of prophets descending from the high place to the sound of the lyres, of drums, of pipes (with seven holes,) and of guitars. The spirit of God will seize you; you will prophesy with them; you will be changed to another man. When these signs shall happen to you, you must do that which you wish. God will be with you; you must come and find me at Galgala to sacrifice: I shall go down there to offer pacificatory sacrifices; you must wait my arrival seven days, and I will let you know what you must do. Saul went, and all that Samuel had predicted came to pass." Now what was there miraculous here? It was easy for Samuel to organize all these meetings, and even to calculate the time and place of the procession of the prophets—a religious ceremony which had its fixed days and hours.

What were the prophets and the fellowship of prophets among the Jews? Formerly I could not comprehend what those prophets could be, forming a line or file of men, naked or almost naked, dancing and singing, with hair dishevelled, marching to the sound of instruments, as David did before the ark. I could not reconcile this idea with that which I formed of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Nahum, &c., who are described as grave men, listening in silence to the whisper of divine truths. Now that I know the character of the actors, I see in their conduct the most simple solution of the problem.

In all the mussulmen countries there exist fellowships of devotees, who associate for certain practices and ceremonies, which are imposed by themselves, or are dictated by their chiefs. Has not the same thing taken place in Spain and Italy? Has it not in France, England, Germany, and in all Christian countries, when religious fanaticism prevailed? If I examine the motives of these voluntary associations, I find several; some natural, derived from the organization of man; others artificial, derived from the social state. Man, organized as he is, cannot live either

solitary, silent, or immovable. The nerves act as necessarily as the blood circulates. These nerves are so constituted, that if the fluid of sensibility is in superabundance, its discharge and evacuation become as necessary as the evacuation of an excess of blood, or of the alimentary secretions. Besides, Nature has so willed it, by a singular mechanism, that two human beings cannot be in presence of each other without their nervous system being reciprocally moved. From these physical bases it results, that, in the social state, men have felt the constant desire to communicate their ideas, their sensations, and their passions, and to be united according to the laws of sympathy or interest, variable in their application. The facility or liberty of these communications and associations forms what is called civil and political liberty. Where this liberty exists, regulated by custom or law, the motion is peaceable and without commotions. Where it does not, and men are constrained by force, they are excited to overcome or elude the obstacles, and to exhaust their activity and sensibility. Then are formed partial associations, and union of factions and sects, which end, in general, in the same way, and which are, at bottom, an instrument of power, sought by individuals as a shelter, and by chiefs as a lever. This is the reason that, in despotic states, there are more of those associations and brotherhoods which cover themselves with a religious mantle to impose on military violence; while in free states, as in America, there exists nothing like them; or those that do exist have no sensible effect. Without doubt, this is the reason why these brotherhoods, these pious associations are so full of zeal, of bigotry, of slavery, and of rudeness in the times of ignorance; while amid the progress of light, of the sciences, and of civilization, they become less fervent.

From this statement, the motives of their activity in all mussulmen countries are evident. Like the dervises, as if by a natural instinct, men unite in brotherhoods around the mosques, in priories, and in the convents. Sometimes the government favors them as instruments; sometimes it dreads their resistance, because, if it strikes a member, the whole body resents it. It is a company for insuring the safety of persons: and what is there different among Christians? How was it with the government of Provence when the king, Rene, instituted the "procession of fools," when there was formed the brotherhood of white penitents, of grey penitents, &c.? It is to be remarked, also, that these brotherhoods are especially to the taste of southerners, without doubt because their vivacity requires to be dissipated in exclamations, in gestures, in spectacles, and ceremonies. When I had weighed these considerations, I conceived that these institutions could not but exist among the ancient Hebrews, where they found ample food. For example, the sacerdotal tribe or cast lived in absolute idleness. The number of the functions of the priests being limited, all the rest, who lived on the produce of offerings and sacrifices, had only to occupy themselves, like the Brahmins and druids, in rites and devout practices, which it was their interest to multiply, in order to procure gifts from the faithful. From such men must have arisen the brotherhoods, the processions, and all that followed.

Among a people subject to constant anarchy, to unregulated power, to the transitory despotism of a single individual, of a single turbulent or powerful family; in this state, in which the people were during all the

times of the judges, (400 years at least,) the religious brotherhoods must have been a shelter; and, as I have already said, a company of insurance against the violence and brutalities of which the book of Judges offers such shocking examples. Finally, in the time of Samuel, when this individual, weak at first, began to aspire to power, and then when he had arrived at it, these brotherhoods offered him a means of supporting his advancement, of strengthening and extending his fame; and it was so much the more necessary to cultivate this means, that he was an intruder into the priesthood, and an usurper with respect to the family of Eli. He had an opposition party, of which we shall soon see the proofs, among the high families, whose vanity he wounded, and among the priests, who ought to have known how much to trust to his visions. From this I deduce, that the procession of prophets, singing and dancing like the derbies, whom Samuel in taking leave of Saul informed him he would meet, must have been well known to him in their movements; must have been formed of his friends, of his devotees, as an anecdote afterwards indicates; for the historian tells us, that when king Saul wished to slay David, who had fled to Samuel in the canton of Naioth, his armed emissaries found a brotherhood of prophets in the act of prophesying, and Samuel, standing up, presiding over them.

As to what the historian adds, "that these emissaries were seized with the spirit of the Lord, and prophesied also; that the same thing happened to two other companies sent by Saul; finally, that the king himself, having arrived in a passion, was seized with a divine spirit, and went to prophesying before Samuel, after having taken off his clothes to remain naked for a day and night;" these strange things might seem incredible to men of cool deliberation, as our people in the north and west. I at first rejected them as not proved; and in fact they required more evidence. Now that I know the contrary, I admit them as probable, for several natural reasons: First, I remark that David, during the time that he lived with Saul, made himself many friends. Among others was Jonathan, son of the king, who sacrificed himself for him. This disposition might induce many emissaries to seek motives to elude the order; others might be influenced by the religious ascendancy which Samuel had acquired over their minds, and among others over that of their prince; finally, all, and especially Saul, were mastered by this mechanism of the nervous system, by this animal magnetism, which even now exercises frequent examples of these phenomena. Observe what passes always, when men assemble for the purpose of expressing a common sentiment: their looks, their cries, their gestures electrize them more and more every moment; and, by the little that a word adds to their ideas, their minds are raised even to madness. See what happens at a tragedy, or at the best plays. If the house is thin, the spectators are moved but feebly; while, if it is full, they are gradually exalted to enthusiasm. See, also, what takes place at the churches of the zealous puritans and methodists: the hearers arrive cool; by little and little their nerves are agitated by the convulsive gestures of the oratorical actor; by the sharp cries from the bottom of his throat; by the pictures of hell and damnation with which he makes it an art to terrify their imaginations. A nervous woman falls into convulsions; then behold a crowd of others imitate her, and the whole

audience is in trepidation. Are not these scenes often seen in different parts of the United States, at the preachings on Sunday, especially at the close of the day? Consult physicians, and they will tell you that, on many occasions, convulsions, even epilepsies, have become contagious to delicate persons, such as women and children. But this nervous irritability exists principally in warm countries, where it is favored and promoted by the food, generally sour, by the abundance of caloric, and by fasting, which is one of the great promoters of visionary manias and extasies. These are the different causes of the nervous phenomena which took place in the singing and yelling assembly of the prophetic brotherhoods at Naioth, and at the hill of the Philistines.

As to the act of prophesying, it is not the fault of the Hebrew books if we form false ideas of it. They say all that is necessary to put them right; they first paint the circumstances, the song, or rather the cries, the nakedness. Then the word which they use to signify prophet and to prophesy is a definition, an explication quite clear; for the word *nabia* is one derived from *naba*, which signifies to be a fool, to play the fool (to be insane,) to cry, to declaim as a poet who sings verses, as a prophet who sings hymns, psalms, or oracles. What, however, is all this but what was done by the Pythia of Delphos; what all the venders of oracles did among the ancients; what is yet done among the mussulmen by the dervises and fakirs (brotherhood of foamers;) and what the ardent fanatics of our bigoted sects do yet? So that even all these people were, or seemed to be beside themselves; out of their natural senses. They were considered as seized and agitated by the divine spirit. Certainly, if any thing characterizes popular ignorance on one side, and sacerdotal imposture and knavery on the other, it is this strange idea; this monstrous opinion of calling those irregular diseases of human nature the spirit of God; of naming epilepsy a divine spirit, a holy disease, as is still done in all Turkey by mussulmen and Christians.

To be continued.

SPIRITS AND DEMONS.

Concluded.

"Though the Devil is supposed to be dreadfully fallen, and to be every thing that is bad; yet he is still represented as possessing great dignity, wonderful accomplishments, and most extraordinary powers. If omnipresence be not ascribed to him, something much like it is. According to our conceptions, a creature can be in but one place at a time; and if the Devil be a creature, he can be in but one place at any given time; consequently, whatever power of access he may have to the human mind, he can only tempt those at that time who are in that place. If he can be in many places, and those far remote from each other, at one time, he must be more than a creature; and he is commonly supposed to be in all parts of the world, tempting men at all the ends of the earth, at one and the same time, and yet to be at that very time in hell. Such absurd notions go far towards ascribing to him the divine attribute of omni-

presence. If omniscience be not ascribed to the Devil, he is supposed to be well acquainted with the hearts of men, to have access to their minds, and secretly to instil thoughts into them; to have a knowledge of future events, and to be capable of enabling others to foretel them. If it be said some of these mistakes are to be found only among the most illiterate Christians, they are still to be found, and belong to the system of Devilism.

"There are persons who suppose, not only that the Devil can himself operate contrary to the laws of Nature, but that he can enable witches, wizards, and sorcerers to do so too; that by his aid they can perform works which, if real, would be miraculous. Those who only suppose that the Devil extends a secret personal influence over the minds of men, ascribe to him powers inconsistent with the idea of his being a creature abandoned of God. The notion, that, in despite of the Almighty, he hath usurped a dominion among his works, hath counteracted his designs, deformed the fair face of creation, and maintains an empire in opposition to the Supreme Governor of the universe, is irreconcilable with the idea of his being a dependant creature and an outcast.

"The Devil is represented as a fallen, degraded being; cast out of heaven and abandoned of God: yet he is described as having increased his power, and extended his empire ever since his fall. Before, he was only a happy subject; now, he is spoken of as a potent monarch, holding extensive dominion. Instead of hearing only of his degradation, his abandonment, his shame and wretchedness, we are continually told of his power, of the success of his enterprizes, of the multitude of his allies and agents; yet still he is said to be the most miserable of all beings. Passages of scripture opposite in their meaning are applied to him. Sometimes he is said to be in chains, shut up in darkness, reserved as a prisoner unto the judgment of the great day. At other times he is represented as the person called in scripture the prince of the world, prince of the power of the air—God of this world. Though said to be the most degraded of beings, he is thus dignified with the title of prince and even of God. Though said to be a prisoner in chains, he is still supposed to be at large on the earth and in the air, and his being bound is referred to a future period. Though the Devil is spoken of as the greatest of criminals, the very ringleader of all mischief, the perfection of all evil, yet he is supposed to be a kind of public officer, a sort of gaoler in hell, and that he will be the future tormenter and executioner of those he hath seduced. Who, that attends to the voice of reason, can believe opinions so self contradictory and subversive of each other?

"The popular notion of the power and influence of Satan has produced the most odious superstition, and generated a thousand painful and foolish apprehensions. Hence has arisen much of the gloom of the hypochondriac; he imagining himself to be continually beset by this secret foe. Hence the wild fancies of the enthusiast, respecting his imaginary combats with the Devil, even, perhaps, when he is striving against the convictions of his own mind and resisting the evidence of truth. Hence the whole system of witchery, with the painful feelings and evil passions produced by its being credited; hence the shocking effects formerly consequent on its supposed detection; and hence a number of the disgusting phrases in the conversation of the uncultivated part of society. Let the

Devil be renounced, and these absurdities, which may be regarded as his shadow, will soon follow him.

"Baneful moral effects are produced by the popular notions concerning the Devil, nor can their influence be otherwise than bad. Filled with these notions, men call their wicked propensities temptations of Satan; their evil thoughts, his suggestions. If they act wrong, he must bear the blame; he instigated them to it. If they feel bad passions, it is he that kindles or stirs them. He must be charged with every evil temper they indulge. If they have fallen into anger, the enemy has been busy with them. Then, he is such a subtle adversary, and they such poor creatures, they cannot be always aware of him. What rational man, who thinks soberly, can help seeing that such reasonings tend to immorality; to lead men to excuse themselves when they act wrong; to lull their consciences and harden their hearts? Indeed, were men continually exposed to the secret temptations and influences of so artful, powerful, and active an enemy, their guilt would be extenuated, and their accountability diminished. As men are naturally fond of excusing themselves when they act wrong, many seem willing to persuade themselves they should not be so bad as they are, if it were not for the Devil. It is no wonder, therefore, that they cling to the popular notions concerning him."

The *immoral* tendency of a belief in the Devil, to which this writer has but slightly alluded, is confirmed by every day's observation. Tell a man who is about to commit a robbery, that he will go to hell for it, to be tormented by Satan, and he immediately reflects that hell is a great way off, and it is, in some measure, uncertain whether he ever gets there. But tell him he will certainly be sent to the state prison, and he instantly becomes alarmed: he perceives that this is a present and serious evil, from which he cannot escape. Restraint is the necessary consequence; and civil law triumphs over the fears of superstition. People who pretend to believe that there are infernal regions, and devils without number, are never influenced by these considerations. They talk about the tormenters, about hell, and about fire and brimstone with as much unconcern as they would do about the man in the moon, and they care as little about the one as the other. Superstition may boast as much as she pleases about producing an important effect in the regulation of human actions—about religion being a necessary restraint on the conduct of man. The fact is otherwise; it restrains nobody; and that for the best of reasons, viz: that human actions can never be regulated by considerations extraneous from the life and situation of man. It is law, moral sentiment, love of reputation, and love of happiness that must forever form the basis of human virtue and human happiness.

According to some fanatics, the Devil will one day triumph over Jehovah himself. They affirm that the number of the Devil's subjects will eventually exceed those of God in the proportion of an hundred to one. If this should turn out to be the case, it is an hundred to one if the Devil does not get the upper hand, and dethrone his celestial antagonist. They had one battle-royal some time ago, and, according to the best accounts, the contest for a long time was doubtful; and in the end but barely terminated in favor of the present ruler. Who knows, then, how soon we may be placed under a different government, and "taste," as Mahomet says,

"the pain of burning." But if the opinion of the Christians be true, I cannot discover how we are to be the losers by this. They tell us we shall burn in hell forever under the just vengeance of an unrelenting God. How can we be worse off under the empire and dominion of the Devil? Whether we fall into the hands of Jehovah or of Satan, the punishment will be equally cruel and interminable.

If the peaceful and philosophic mind had no better hope than that which results from taking its chance under the vindictive power of, and resembling the Christian God, or the rancorous malice of his infernal majesty, the prospect would be dreary indeed. Genuine philosophy, however, teaches lessons and discloses doctrines of a different kind. It teaches man that he ought to reject all supernaturals, and to repress that spirit of malignity with which he has been inspired by revealed religion. It teaches, that his true interests depend not on the belief of what it is impossible to understand, but on the cultivation of a just, humane disposition; that his own happiness is interwoven with that of others; and that in proportion as he injures his fellow creatures, in the same proportion the evil will one day recoil on himself.

EXCOMMUNICATION.

Mr. Editor—I enclose the excommunication from the catholic church, pronounced at Philadelphia, by the bishop ———, against the reverend William Hogan, which I think the more worthy of notice, as it is a fair specimen of the charitable feelings exhibited by Christian priests of all denominations towards their offending brethren. I am not well aware of the merits of the controversy between this bishop and priest; but it appears that Mr. Hogan had on his side a majority of the congregation over which he was pastor. This was demonstrated by a pitched battle among the members of the church militant, waged within the church and surrounding grave yard, and prosecuted with staves, brickbats, stones, &c. The bishop's party were driven off the ground, and Hogan and his adherents sang *Te Deum* to the god of armies. Under this discomfiture the bishop had no other means left but to consign the priest over to the devil, to be dealt with and tormented by his Satanic majesty. This he has done in a very superior style, although not quite equal to some examples of his predecessors.

The pious followers of Mr. Hogan could not resist this mode of warfare; and, fearing the same curses might fall upon themselves, they quit his ranks. Hogan retired, took a wife, and has settled down an honest farmer, determined to risk the awful buffetings of Satan.

Similar denunciations were made, a few years since, against a worthy lady of the city of New York, by the reverend Dr. S. This lady, not having the fear of the church before her eyes, and, as the doctor no doubt thought, being moved and instigated by the devil, formed an attachment for a heretic, a universalist, whom she married; and, occasionally accompanying him out of civility to his church, became a convert; no longer believing in the eternal roasting of ninety-nine out of a hundred of mankind, in a fire made of the worst of materials, brimstone. This

humane sentiment was too shocking for the *pious* doctor to hear. He cited her before him. She humbly begged to be dismissed from his church in peace, in friendship, and Christian charity. This did not accord with the doctor's ideas of rigid justice which the *orthodox* church demanded. A victim must be offered up; a public example, to deter others from like offences, must be made to the insulted dignity of God's elect. Accordingly, he pronounced from the pulpit anathemas against her of the same import, although not in the same terms, as those under consideration.

A. B.

"By the authority of God Almighty, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the undefiled Virgin Mary, mother and patroness of our Saviour, and of all celestial virtues, Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Powers, Cherubims, and Seraphims; and of all the Holy Patriarchs, Prophets, and of all the Apostles and Evangelists of the Holy Innocents, who, in the sight of the Holy Lamb are found worthy to sing the new song of the Holy Martyrs and Holy Confessors, and of all the Holy Virgins, and of all Saints, together with the Holy Elect of God—may he, William Horgan, be damned.

"We excommunicate and anathematize him, and from the threshold of the Holy Church of God Almighty we sequester him, that he may be tormented, disposed, and be delivered over with Athan and Abiram, and with those who say unto the Lord, 'Depart from us, for we desire none of thy ways.' As a fire is quenched with water, so let the light of him be put out for evermore, unless it shall repent him, and make satisfaction. Amen!

"May the Father, who created man, curse him! May the Son, who suffered for us, curse him! May the Holy Ghost, who suffered for us in baptism, curse him! May the Holy Cross which Christ for our salvation, triumphing over his enemies, ascended, curse him!

"May the Holy and Eternal Virgin Mary, Mother of God, curse him! May St. Michael, the Advocate of the Holy Souls, curse him! May all the angels, principalities, and powers, and all heavenly armies, curse him!

"May the praiseworthy multitude of Patriarchs and Prophets curse him!

"May St. John the Precursor, and St. John the Baptist, and St. Peter, and St. Paul, and St. Andrew, and all other of Christ's Apostles together, curse him! and may the rest of our Disciples and Evangelists, who by their preaching converted the universe, and the holy and wonderful company of Martyrs and Confessors, who by their holy works are found pleasing to God Almighty! May the holy choir of the Holy Virgins, who for the honor of Christ have despised the things of the world, damn him! May all the saints, from the beginning of the world to everlasting ages, who are found to be beloved of God, damn him!

"May he be damned wherever he be, whether in the house or in the stable, the garden or the field, or the highway; or in the woods, or in the waters, or in the church! May he be cursed in living and in dying!

"May he be cursed in eating and in drinking, in being hungry, in being thirsty, in fasting, in sleeping, in slumbering, and in sitting, in living, in working, in resting and blood letting!

"May he be cursed in all the faculties of his body!

"May he be cursed inwardly and outwardly! May he be cursed in his brains and in his virtex, in his temples, in his eyebrows, in his cheeks, in his jaw bones, in his nostrils, in his teeth and grinders, in his lips, in his throat, in his shoulders, in his arms, in his fingers!

"May he be damned in his mouth, in his breasts, in his heart and purtenance, down to the very stomach!

"May he be cursed in his reins and in his groins; in his thighs, in his genitals, and in his hips, and his knees, his legs and feet, and toe nails!

"May he be cursed in all his joints, and articulation of the members! From the crown of his head to the sole of his feet may there be no soundness!

"May the Son of the living God, with all the glory of his majesty, curse him! And may heaven, with all the powers that move therein, rise up against him and curse and damn him; unless he repent and make satisfaction!

"Amen. So be it. Be it so. Amen."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the inconsistencies, absurdities, and contradictions of the Bible.
By the Secretary.

LECTURE FIFTH.

We are now arrived at the examination of that part of the Old Testament, in which, we are told, events are related pregnant with the fate of the whole human race—in which the vilest reptile, to which the Creator is stated to have given a being, is represented as having been possessed of power and influence far surpassing that of omnipotence, and which he employed successfully in defeating the end of man's creation, and in compelling the Almighty not only to withhold all farther benefits from the creatures he had made, but to curse the very ground on which they trod, in order to deprive it of its original fruitfulness. And by whom, or rather by what terrific power was it that the Deity, according to theologians, was reduced to the dire necessity of involving the universe in this dreadful state of misery and woe? On turning to the 1st verse of the 3d chapter of Genesis, we shall find that all this mischief was brought about by that comparatively insignificant animal called a serpent! "Now," says the writer of this book, "the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Nothing is more common in the empire of the marvellous than the stories in which we read of some dragon or serpent possessing an influence over the destiny of mortals, until heroic valor or miraculous power delivers them from the ravages of these monsters. In these legends, a virgin, a young girl, or a woman, is always grouped with the object of terror, or malignant principle, and the conqueror. Such is the fiction of Apollo, piercing with his arrows the serpent Python, at the entrance of the grotto where Themis the virgin proclaimed her oracles; and of Jason on the banks of a river of Colchis, aided by Medea, still a virgin, vanquishing the dragon that guarded the golden fleece.

We also readily recognize in these narratives the figurative expression of the astronomical subjects of Perseus, the liberator of Andromeda, threatened by a sea monster, and of Orion, the conqueror of the serpent—themselves the emblems of the triumph of virtue over vice—of the good over the evil principle—and, dropping all allegory, of the victory of the sun of spring over winter, and of light over darkness. Among the Egyptians, a serpent was worshipped under the name of *Ob* or *Aub*. It was an emblem of the sun; also of time and eternity. By some it was esteemed the same as Osiris: by others, the same as Vulcan. The symbolical worship of the serpent was, in the first ages, very extensive; and was introduced into all the ceremonies, wherever celebrated.

Although the Jewish law prohibited all applications to, or recognition of *Ob*, or the serpent, we find that a brazen serpent was actually set up by the priests, as an object to which the Jews were to look, and thus derive a cure for the bite of that animal. Among Christians, the crucifixion of Jesus is regarded as a prototype of the elevation of the brazen serpent on a pole. As long as Christianity struggled obscurely against polytheism, its worship would not admit of any thing but simple rites, free from all show. But a public worship can scarcely do without some visible and observable signs. In a large assembly, words reach the ears of a few with difficulty; while sensible objects speak to the eyes of all. They address one of the most natural and most universal inclinations. The multitude are pleased with the magnificence of their religious acts, and think that symbols cannot be too much multiplied.

Such was the case with Christianity when, on the ruins of polytheism, it publicly established its churches and its religion. Its progress was the more rapid, because it was apprehended that the change from a religion full of pomp and emblems, to an austere religion such as Christianity originally was, might disgust those who were accustomed to see and to touch that which they believed and which they adored. Rather than imprudently proscribe the objects of a veneration, which it was difficult to destroy, the Christian priests adopted them. More than one temple was converted into a church; more than one divine name was honored as the name of a saint; and a great number of images and legends passed early into the new worship, alone preserved by the ancient respect of the new believers. Hence we perceive the facility with which the legend of a celestial being, the conqueror of the serpent, the principle of evil, became conformable to the language, to the spirit, and to the origin of Christianity. It formed a prominent feature in the ceremonies at an early period, and was exhibited in paintings. St. Michael,

the chief of the archangels, was represented to the eyes of the faithful piercing the infernal dragon, the ancient enemy of the human race. In the fifth century during the religious processions in France, and later in the west of Europe, the image of a winged serpent was for three days exposed to the gaze of the multitude, and its defeat was indicated by the ignominious manner in which it was carried about during the last of these days. It is difficult not to perceive an intimate connection between this legend of the Christians and the allegory which indicates the complete triumph of the sun over winter on the return of spring.

I shall, doubtless, be told that these legends and allegories are discountenanced by protestants, who now call themselves the *pure church*, and accuse the catholics, although by far the most numerous, of being the only party chargeable with introducing the pagan mythology into the Christian religion. To this I answer, that the protestants of this as well as of every other country are indebted to the catholics alone for the books containing the dogmas of their religion. I have already shown, that those books were compiled or fabricated at a period long subsequent to that in which they are generally supposed to have had their origin, and that their doctrines and precepts are a mere adaptation, though a very unskilful one, of the doctrines and precepts of the oriental nations. It follows, therefore, that the story of the serpent told in the book of Genesis, and which forms the basis of Christianity, was derived from the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, &c., the mythologies of whom have a striking resemblance, as we shall perceive in the course of these lectures, to the religions of the present day.

To be continued.

Institution of Practical Education.—Already the tongue of slander is at work to injure this invaluable establishment. The enemies of free inquiry, who always entertain hostile feelings towards every system calculated to benefit mankind which does not coincide with their bigoted principles, anticipating a failure in this instance, seemed, at first, to view with indifference the efforts making to render the Institution permanent. But no sooner was it discovered, that the zeal of its patrons and the rapid increase of the pupils were likely to disappoint the hopes of these malevolents, than they immediately resolved on trying what effect misrepresentation would have in retarding its progress. Accordingly, in furtherance of this praiseworthy object, they are now industriously circulating a report, that *direct attacks on all religions, particularly on Christianity*, is one of the leading features in the system taught at the Institution.

The authors of this assertion knew it to be utterly *false* when they audaciously uttered it. If they ever visited the Institution, they must have learned from the mouth of the superintendent, and from observation, that religion formed no part of the exercises in which the children are engaged. This subject is not even so much as named in their hearing. The course of instruction is confined entirely to objects within their

comprehension, and the nature of which they are taught from ocular demonstration or from analogy. Beyond this, they are left to their parents or guardians, who, on finding that nothing has been done to bias the mind in favor of one sect more than another, have it in their power to inculcate their own ideas of religion, and the observance of those ceremonies which appear to them the most rational. Unless this course had been adopted, it would have been impossible to have rendered the Institution generally useful, by avoiding those sectarian distinctions which so frequently defeat a correct and liberal education.

It has been remarked, by an intelligent writer, that a stronger objection to teaching what is called revealed religion can hardly be offered, than the conversations that pass between children and their instructors, when the mysteries of this religion are first presented to their notice. Children are, in general, predisposed to pay great deference and respect to the information and experience of their superiors. If, then, an infant, in the innocence and simplicity of its heart, should discover a spirit of inquiry, bordering as it were on suspicion, how came it that the advocates of religion, instead of giving credit to sentiments which proceed from no sarcastic disposition, but are uttered in the honest spirit of inquiry, should, as is almost uniformly the case, check these effusions of innocence, by frowningly testifying their displeasure, and denouncing a punishment on their repetition? Is this a mode of instruction fitted to produce conviction? Is it by such means that the infant mind is to be impressed with correct ideas of Deity? Or does the conduct of either party, in such a scene, speak in favor of a religion which is to be thus enforced? The bigot will pronounce this an early symptom of the waywardness of our nature, which must be checked for the salvation of the little sinner, and the glory of its Creator. The philosopher will answer, that it is a sudden effort of reason, in its feeblest stages, to stem the torrent which is about to overwhelm it.

In conveying to youth a knowledge of natural history, chemistry, botany, astronomy, geography, and other useful branches of science, no inquiries of the learner are either feared or discouraged. They are, on the contrary, grateful to the teacher, who, besides thereby relaxing the fatigues of his office, becomes better acquainted with the capacity, the progress, and the improvement of his scholar. Inquiries are not only useful but necessary: they open new channels for information, and enable the instructor so to familiarize and explain, that his instructions are given and received with increased profit and delight. If it be contended that these objections of children arise only from the incapacity to comprehend, incident to their years, then it becomes a question, why instruction is to be forced on them out of season? Their advancement in the science cannot be thereby accelerated; for a divine revelation could not, like a mere human invention, require time and laborious investigation to display its principles. Is it fair, then, as soon as reason begins to dawn, instead of encouraging and promoting its activity, thus instantly to put it in irons, and annex ever to an effort to escape the penalties of treason? Is there so little confidence in the internal purity of a divine religion, that its evidence cannot be confided to the unbiassed understanding of an adult, but its defenders must be pressed to the ser-

vice before its nature is known, and while they possess not the means of resistance? The conduct of religious professors is a striking proof of their conviction, that if children were left to the unprejudiced exercise of their mental powers, all their schemes and creeds would speedily fall without opposition.

Ecce Homo!—This work (complete) is now on sale at the office of the Correspondent, corner of Vesey street and Broadway, and the bookstore corner of Reed and Greenwich streets; price 75 cents, in boards. A liberal deduction will be given on quantities purchased for distribution.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Christianity, observes a modern writer, may be justly said to form a curious and awfully instructive chapter in the history of human nature. Professing a religion of meekness, it has shown itself most carnal and worldly minded; professing a religion of good will and charity, it has armed itself with the sword and firebrand; professing a religion spiritual and undefiled, it has cherished the relics of paganism, and befooled its followers with childish fables and mendacious miracles; and professing a religion of purity, its institutions seem as if expressly devised to spread a moral taint throughout the whole of society. In all religions there have ever been false shepherds and Judases, but in none such a system of sensuality and profligacy as in that of Christ. There may, doubtless, be many amiable and truly virtuous characters to be found even in the midst of all this iniquity; among pagans and infidels, and even among the sensual followers of Mahomet. The dissolute conduct of monks has been a fertile subject for the pen, even of Italian writers, from the days of Boccaccio: we might, however, charitably suppose that such disgusting laxity of morals had long ago ceased to prevail—but no: as the Christian church is essentially the same, both in its doctrines and spirit, to this very hour, so are the manners of its priesthood equally impure. It has lost much of its temporal power; but in bigotry, in abject superstition, in revolting hypocrisy—it is still the same.

Religion of Mahomet.—The Arabian Lawgiver provides for the honorable marriage of Jewish and Christian women with Mahometans, but prohibits them as concubines. Have either Jews or Christians ever thought of making any reciprocal provision? His law of slavery is, "If slaves come to you, you shall,"—not imprison and then sell them by public sale, though no claimant appears, as, in the 19th century, is the law of Christians—but, "redeem them; and it is forbidden to you to send them forth." And this was a man standing up in the wilds of Arabia in the 7th century!

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE TRAVELS OF SCARMENTADO.

[Translated from the French of Voltaire for the Correspondent.]

Continued from page 19.

On my arrival, however, I was much surprised to find that there were more Christian churches in Turkey than in Candia. I even saw vast troops of monks, who made their orisons to the Virgin Mary, and abused Mahomet without molestation; some in Greek, some in Latin, and others again in Arminian; but they could not rest without abusing each other, as well. Slaves as they were, they quarrelled like dogs; and like them, too, when they became troublesome, were beaten into harmony by their masters, with good cudgels.

At the time of my arrival, the grand vizier extended his favor to the Greeks. Their patriarch accused me of having paid a visit to the chief priest of the Latins, and I was condemned in full divan to receive a hundred strokes of the bastinado upon the soles of my feet; or, if I should feel any scruples of conscience, I had the choice of a fine of 500 sequins instead. The next week, the grand vizier was strangled, and his successor, who, of course, was friendly to the Latins, took umbrage at my going to supper with the Greeks, and bestowed upon me the same compliment once more. My sequins were too desirable to be allowed to rest in my own coffers. I then determined to have nothing more to do with either Greek or Latin; and, to pass away the time, I hired a charming young Circassian, as lovely as the morning, and more tender than a turtle dove, but, unfortunately for me, as devout as an old woman. One night, in the transports of her affection, she cried out "Alla, Illa, Alla." I thought these were expressions of fondness, and also cried out, "Alla, Illa, Alla." "Ah!" exclaimed my Circassian, "blessed be Mahomet! You are a mussulman." I tried in vain to convince her that I was only thinking of a young girl, not of an old prophet. The next morning the Imam came to circumcise me; and, as I made some objections, the cadi, who was one of the most humane and tender hearted of cadis, proposed to empale me in the most admirable manner. I got off for another thousand, and fled into Persia, resolving to hear no more masses, Greek, or Latin, and to be very careful how I cried out, Alla, Illa, Alla.

The first thing they asked me at Ispahan, was whether I was for the black or the white sheep. I replied that I was quite indifferent as to the color, provided the flesh was tender; for I did not know that the priests

had made a question of religion of the black and the white sheep. They accused me of turning their religion into ridicule, [which, by the way, was quite unnecessary;] and so I found myself involved in a most violent affair, even before I had got through the gates. It cost me a great many more of my sequins, to get rid of the sheep.

From thence I pushed on to China, which, my interpreter assured me, was, of all countries in the world, the most agreeable and the most free. The Tartars had just made themselves masters of it, after wasting all with fire and sword; and the reverend fathers the jesuits, on the one hand, and the reverend fathers the Dominicans, on the other, declared that they were gaining innumerable souls to God, without any body knowing any thing of the matter. I never saw such zealous convertists: they persecuted each other; they wrote to Rome whole volumes of accusations and calumnies; and damned their own souls, over and over again, to secure that of a miserable pagan. In particular, they had a horrible war between themselves, concerning the method of making a bow. The jesuits wished the Chinese to salute their fathers and mothers in the Chinese manner, while the Dominicans insisted that it should be after the fashion of the Romans. For my sins, the jesuits took it into their heads that I was a Dominican; and they represented me to his Chinese majesty as a spy of the pope. The supreme council charged a mandarin, who ordered a sergeant, who commanded four sbirri, to seize me, and tie me carefully hand and foot; and, after a hundred and forty genuflexions, I was led into the presence of his majesty. He asked me if I was a spy of the pope, and whether that prince intended to come in person to dethrone him? I answered, that the pope was a priest of 70 years of age; that his dominions were 4000 leagues from those of his most sacred Tartaro-Chinese majesty; that he had about 2000 soldiers, who mounted guard with umbrellas; that he never dethroned any body, and that his majesty might sleep in perfect security. This was the least fatal of all my misfortunes; for they only banished me to Macao, from whence I embarked once more for Europe.

On the coast of Golconda, I found that my ship wanted repairing, and I took advantage of the delay to go and see the court of the great Aureng-Zebe, of whom so many wonders have been told. He was then at Delhi. I had the satisfaction of being present at the imposing ceremony, with which he received the celestial present sent him by the sheriff of Mekka; this was the broom with which the holy mansion, the Caaba, had been swept, and which cleanses all the corruptions of the soul. Aureng-Zebe did not appear to stand in need of it, for he was the most pious man in all Hindostan. It is true, he had cut the throat of one of his brothers, and poisoned his father; twenty rajahs and as many ourahs had perished by his orders under the torture; but all that was nothing: his devotion was the only theme of his priests and ministers, and they could compare him to nobody but his majesty, the most serene emperor of Morocco, Muley Ismael, who never cut off a head without first saying prayers. For my part, I said nothing; I had learned something by my travels, and I was well aware that it was not for me to decide between these two august sovereigns. But a young Frenchman who lived with me was indiscreet enough to say, in the presence of my

interpreter, that there were in Europe very pious monarchs, who governed their people well, and who even went to church, without killing their fathers or brothers, or cutting off the heads of their subjects. I went instantly and loaded my camels. We set off, the Frenchman and I, without a moment's delay. I have since learned, that, on the very same night, the officers of the great Aureng-Zebe came to seize us, but they only found my interpreter. He was publicly executed, and every body agreed that there was no great harm done.

I had now only to visit Africa, to have seen the beauties of all our eastern hemisphere—and I saw that too. My vessel was taken by negro corsairs, who carried us all into the interior, where they offered us the option of working in their fields, or of having our noses and ears cut off. We were not long deliberating. At the end of a year I was ransomed, and returned to Candia. I have now seen every thing that is good and beautiful and admirable upon the earth, and am determined to wander no more from my native land.

APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS.

Continued from page 23.

Simon.—Cæsar Nero, listen unto me. Dismiss these fellows from thy presence, in order that I, when I shall come before my Father who is in heaven, may show favor to thee.

Nero.—And how know we this, that thou wilt ascend into heaven?

Simon.—Command that a tower of strong timber be raised for me, and that it shall be placed in the field of Mars, that I may ascend thereon; and when I shall have ascended, I will command my angels that they descend from heaven before me, and that they bear me up to heaven to my Father, to the end thou mayest know I have been sent from thence. For they cannot come to me on earth, among sinners.

Nero.—I will see if thou wilt accomplish that which thou sayest.

Simon.—Command it, then, to be done quickly, that thou mayest see.

Then Nero caused a tower to be erected in the field of Mars, and commanded all the people and all the authorities to assemble, and see this spectacle. So next day the emperor Nero, with the senate, and Roman knights, and all the people, came into the field of Mars to this exhibition. And when all were assembled, the emperor commanded that Peter and Paul should be present in the assemblage; and, as soon as they were brought before him, he saith unto them, The truth is now about to be made known.

Peter and Paul.—It is not we who shall expose this man, but the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who he hath falsely asserted himself to be.

And Paul, having turned to Peter, said, It behoveth me to kneel to God in prayer: Do thou speak if thou seest Simon attempt any thing, for thou wert first chosen of the Lord.

And, kneeling down, Paul prayed before all the people. But Peter kept his eye on Simon, saying, Begin that which thou hast undertaken; for the time of thy exposure is near; when we shall be acknowledged by this generation. For I see Christ, who hath called me, and Paul also.

Nero.—And whither will ye go, contrary to my will?

Peter.—Whither the Lord shall call us.

Nero.—And who is your Lord?

Peter.—The Lord Jesus Christ, whom I behold, and by whom we are called.

Nero.—And will ye ascend into heaven?

Peter.—We shall go wherever it shall be the will of him who calleth us.

Simon.—That thou mayest know, O emperor, that these are impostors, I will, very soon after my ascension into heaven, send my angels, and they shall bring thee to me.

Nero.—Do then as thou hast said.

Then Simon mounted on the top of the tower before all the people, his hands spread out, and crowned with laurel, and he began to fly.

Nero having seen this, thus addressed Peter:

Nero.—This Simon is true; but thou and Paul are seducers.

Peter.—Thou wilt soon see that we are the true disciples of Christ; and that he is not the Christ, but a magician and an enchanter.

Nero.—Do ye yet persist in your falsities? Behold, ye see him ascend even into heaven.

Peter (to Paul.)—Paul, raise thy head and behold.

And when Paul had raised his head, his eyes filled with tears, and had seen Simon flying, he spoke thus:

Paul (to Peter.)—Peter, why dost thou delay? Fulfil that which thou hast undertaken, for now are we called of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And Nero, hearing them, laughed and said,

Nero.—They see already they are defeated, and they actually are in despair.

Peter.—Thou shalt find that we are not in despair.

Paul (to Peter.)—Do quickly that which thou hast to do.

Then Peter, looking up towards Simon, called out, I conjure you, ye angels of Satan, who bear this man through the air, to deceive the hearts of unfaithful men, by God the creator of all things, and by Jesus Christ, that ye instantly cease bearing him, and that ye abandon him.

And he, being immediately forsaken, fell down in the place called the Sacred Way; and, being divided into four parts, he beat together four stones into one, which serves yet as a witness to the victory of the apostles unto this day.

Then Paul raised his head at the noise which was made by his striking the ground, and said, We give thanks to thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast justified us, and hast unmasked Simon the magician, and hast proved that in verity we are thy disciples.

Then Nero, full of wrath, caused Peter and Paul to be put in chains, and had the body of Simon strictly watched for three days and three nights, thinking he would come to life the third day.

Peter.—Thou deceivest thyself, O emperor. He will not rise again; for he is certainly dead, and condemned to everlasting pains.

Nero.—What hath caused you to commit such a crime?

Peter.—His obstinacy; and, if thou couldst discern it, it is well for him that he hath perished, that his great blasphemies against God might not

be multiplied, which would have caused his punishment to have been heavier.

Nero.—You have practised before me your suspicious arts, and on that account, for so bad an example, I will destroy you.

Peter.—Not that thou wilt, but that which hath been promised us must of necessity be accomplished.

To be continued.

CLEAR FACTS.

Dear Sir—Accept my thanks for the copy of the “Antidote” containing some crude remarks on my collection of “Historical Facts,” &c. As soon as you have published the whole of my “Triumph of Truth,” and the clergy have finished their remarks on it, you will receive my expose on their futility. And, as an evidence of the sandy foundation on which their first remarks rest, I will inform them, that instead of my extract being taken from the French, or any deistical encyclopædia, as they suppose, it is taken from their own thorough going Dobson’s Encyclopædia.

Nay, I can assure them, that in the whole of my collection of “Historical Facts,” &c. which now amount to near 250, there is not a single line that is taken from any deistical writer whatever. My doubts concerning the Bible are the offspring of my own mind, and drawn exclusively from works devoted to inspiration, or from authors who are consulted by the clergy.

In the mean time, as the clergy have been pleased to address to me another essay, containing what they style 8 “*Clear Points*,” but which are the muddiest “clear points” I ever saw, I do not think it worth while to trouble you, or the clergy, with any new matter until my present stock has been published. Yet; upon a second thought, I think I may as well furnish them with the five following “Clear” Facts, which will be sufficient to refute 8000 of such “Clear Points,” instead of 8.

It is a “clear” fact, that every religion known on the globe was founded on miracles.

It is a “clear” fact, that miracles have never flourished except in ages of ignorance, or among nations buried in the most abject superstition.

It is a “clear” fact, that not a single miracle has ever been performed since the dawn of philosophy, or in the presence of an enlightened people, Prince Hohenlohe’s excepted.

It is a “clear” fact, that wherever ignorance and superstition have erected their throne, these miracles flourish as plentiful as ever to the present day; as witness the numerous miracles still performed in all the catholic countries by your mother church.

It is a “clear” fact, that the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe are better authenticated than any in your Bible, for they were performed in an enlightened age, and among our enlightened selves. Yet, what do they prove? Why, that catholics possess the necessary *quantum* of ignorance and superstition to enjoy the felicity of working miracles.

Very respectfully yours, C. SCHULTZ.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH.

Continued from page 28.

59. It is a fact, that all your priests pronounce Moses to have been the greatest and most learned man that Egypt ever produced. But

60. It is a fact, that Moses had not attained to their highest grade of learning or mysteries; because he was yet ignorant of one of their sublime doctrines—that of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments—as also that of the great antiquity of this world and the universe. And we confidently challenge the Jewish and Christian world to produce even a single verse in all Moses's writings that will disprove these facts. If, therefore, the whole of Moses's system of theology consisted in his knowledge of the unity of God, as is really the fact, then it is manifest that he never was initiated into the higher mysteries of his Egyptian countrymen. It is a fact, that, as the Egyptians had a small temple or *sanctum sanctorum*, within each large temple, Moses resolved to imitate all the Egyptian systems and policy that were practicable to a wandering nation like his; and for that purpose it was, that he invented his ark of the covenant, or tabernacle, one of the most admirable political engines ever used by a statesman.

61. It is a fact, that after Moses once got his God shut up in his cage of shittim wood, he could make him say or do whatever the keeper pleased!

62. It is a fact, that as the orientals never recorded a single natural event without magnifying it into a miracle, so are we bound to consider the numerous miracles of Moses as nothing more than exaggerated stories; and all founded on some such extraordinary but simple facts to which we have traced his "blossomed rod" and "burning bush." Those who are desirous of seeing our exposé of all the miracles of Moses, must wait until our "Review of the Law" is published.

63. It is a fact, that our explanation of the manner in which those two miracles was performed were published more than a year ago, in the east as well as the west, and yet no priest has dared to refute us.

64. It is a fact, that Moses was totally ignorant of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. And will any impartial inquirer after truth say, that God would leave his first and greatest prophet ignorant of the two most important doctrines in theology? Nay; that would be an insult to the wisdom of even a heathen god.

65. It is a fact, that if we had the same chance as Moses, with the same mass of ignorance and superstition to operate upon, we could produce as many miracles as he has done. And, as many may peruse this who have not seen our "Biblical Challenge to Bishop Hobart and every clergy," we will cite a part of our explanation of one of those miracles: "Now, the whole art and mystery in performing the trick of the 'blossomed rod,' lay in this, Moses contemplated performing this miracle some weeks before he announced it publicly; and, for that purpose, had selected for Aaron two rods from the almond tree, so near alike as not to be easily distinguished from each other; one of the rods remained on the almond tree, while the other was partly immersed in lukewarm water,

and placed in the holiest place, where no one, excepting Moses and Aaron, were allowed to enter. In a few weeks that part of the rod which was above the water could have 'budded and brought forth buds,' and in two or three more would have 'blossomed with blossoms,' with some buds unopened, while the tree from which it was taken exhibited no such phenomena. And, as soon as this rod was ready, Moses commanded the twelve rods to be placed in the tabernacle over night; during which, he withdrew Aaron's barren rod and substituted the other in its place. And lo! in the morning, 'it had budded and brought forth buds, and blossomed with blossoms!' As to its 'yielding almonds,' that was but a trifling fiction of Moses, by way of embellishment, after the custom of his Egyptian countrymen," &c.

66. It is a fact, that Moses's romance of Joseph and his progenitors, king Abram and queen Sarah, are nothing more than a part of the usual fictions, adopted by every nation in ancient times, in order to conceal a more disgraceful origin.

67. It is a fact, that the Chinese, a nation more ancient than the Jews, adopted a similar mode, in order to conceal the disgraceful origin of that people; for

68. It is a fact, that they are descended from the Hindoos, the most ancient nation on this globe, but from a tribe of criminals or outcasts, who were condemned to servitude or banishment.

69. It is a fact, that facts, as glaring as the noonday sun to the eyes of the impartial, still continue dark as their darkness in Egypt to every priestridden people.

70. It is a fact, that Christianity has ruled the civilized world for 1800 years.

71. It is a fact, that the only influence of Christianity during all that period, among the various nations who professed it, was to be seen in the universal systems of ignorance and superstition which prevailed over its votaries.

72. It is a fact, that nothing but persecution, with endless wars, misery, and woes, was the lot of the Christian world during nearly all that time.

73. But it is a solemn fact, that Philosophy made her appearance only about two hundred years ago; and, ever since the moment of her birth, happiness has blessed the nations once more! But had heaven prevented her appearance altogether, then Christianity would still have been buried in the same state of ignorance and superstition, and permitted her votaries to persecute, hang, burn, and destroy each other, in honor of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary!!

74. It is a fact, that the awful experiment of Christianity has been tried for about 1600 years, and failed to produce the least fruit of national happiness. It is, therefore, deserving of no higher name than that of a "quack" religion.

75. It is a fact, and admitted by the most learned Christians, that the Shaster or Bible of Brahma was written about 1400 years before Moses was born.

76. Another fact is also admitted, which is, that the Palis, an ancient people of Hindostan, actually carried their sacred writings into Egypt.

To be continued.

ANTICIPATIONS.

Mr. Editor—There is no doubt but the stranger black coat, who advised the traveller to extinguish his light, was a *priest*; and in our days so much inclined are these dark clad gentry to “love darkness rather than light,” that, when we try to secure our little torch from their damper, they force us away, denounce, and curse to hell. With me, also, there is little doubt, that a reputed poison must be felt to be most “killing” to that which it affects, when it calls into immediate existence an “Antidote,” although that antidote be only quackery; and there is quackery in theology as well as in physic; and what the quack hates as poison, the true physician often administers in cure of the patient. I have gained by observation, that the defeated religious opponent betrays his decline and fall by heat, reproach, and cursing, as the wounded bird discovers her broken wing by an unavailing flutter. Yet, although the defeated one is foolish in her awkward flutter, we, who aimed the fatal shaft, should only calmly approve the unerring aim, and let the *wound itself* inflict all the pain which grows out of the encounter.

There is a time when a corrupt and wicked thing becomes ripe and falls, like fruit in autumn; and there have been times when that which was upheld by power has, by that same power, been weakened and destroyed. The people of these states have, because of ancestry and education, believed in and supported Christianity; and this same people will, in time, through knowledge and science, decline all support to its system, and respect to its doctrines. For it is admitted, I believe, that this nation will, in their ignorance, become bigots and fanatics; or, under their constitution and laws, stand forth a beacon to political and religious freedom; and who doubts as to the course they will take, when it is considered, that the *youth* of these states have cast off the fear, and, with it, the yoke of religious tyrants? Fifty years hence, whoever presents to my spectacled sight a bigot or fanatic, of twenty-one years of age, shall have my loveliest daughter in wedlock and half my fortune, if, in the mean time, priests shall consent to perform my marriage ceremony, and their “Providence” grant me wealth.

When our first century shall be completed; when, Mr. Editor, your society shall meet on that nation’s birthday, and find the “bird of Jove” perched over the glorious motto, “Fourth of July, 1900; Rights of Man, and Common Sense,” then, indeed, shall nothing more have taken place than I most fully anticipate, and hope to see; and no more fruit will have become ripe than is now in spring time sown.

E. P. H.

MIRACLES.

Mr. Editor—It is well known that most, if not all, of the devotees of the prevailing systems of religion claim, as a circumstance to confirm the truth or divinity of their respective systems, that they are founded on miracles. But, so far from this circumstance being a confirmation of the truth or divinity of a religion, I should consider it direct to the contrary. For what is a miracle but an occurrence that takes place in the presence

of witnesses, who do not understand (in consequence of their ignorance) the causes by which the thing is produced or made to appear. Some, we have reason to believe, know the causes, who still represent them as miracles to their deluded followers. But, to those who are sincere, the moment the causes are understood by which an occurrence takes place, it ceases to be a miracle. Hence, if we consider the Almighty Ruler of the universe an unchangeable being, and that he governs the world by laws immutable, we have every reason to believe that no occurrence can take place in the view of man independent of some physical, moral, or natural cause. It is in proportion to the ignorance of every age and country that miracles abound; a fact confirmed by the history of all ages and nations. As the people of every country have progressed in correct knowledge, miracles, supernatural predictions, and witchcraft have declined, until among the most refined nations they have entirely ceased. But miracles, now and then, take place in catholic countries, though more frequently in the eastern parts of Asia, a land that ever has been fertile in prodigies, as it ever has been in oppression and ignorance, since the time that the Jews exterminated the Canaanites.

If it be admitted that miracles performed by the founders or authors of a religion are a confirmation of the truth or divinity of its origin, we may as well say that ignorance is also a confirmation, because as religion, with such proofs or confirmations, must originate with an ignorant age or nation, the witnesses who transmit the testimony of the religion to succeeding generations must have a very superficial knowledge of natural or moral causes.

OBSERVER.

CHRISTIAN MASSACRES.

Mr. Editor—I lately read in one of our city papers some verses, called A Hymn for St. Stephen's day, said to be written by a bishop Heber, the four first lines of which attracted my notice. They are as follows:

“The son of God is gone to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar!
Who follows in his train?”

On reading these lines the mind involuntarily recurs to the cruel wars and inhuman massacres which have been perpetrated to establish the godship of the reputed son of an obscure woman of Nazareth, called Mary. The emperor Constantine, after having put to death his wife, his uncle, and his son, applied to the priests of Jupiter to be absolved from his crimes, and, on being repulsed, first unfurled this bloody banner; and, in the name of the son of God, immolated tens of thousands of human beings. The standard bearers have all been well remunerated for their services in this warfare. Bishop Heber, lately deceased, bore this banner at Calcutta, and no doubt received about ten thousand pounds sterling a year for his zeal in rendering the people subservient to despotism.

VERBUM SAT.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the inconsistencies, absurdities, and contradictions of the Bible.
By the Secretary.

LECTURE FIFTH.

Continued.

Before I enter on an exposition of the striking conformity that exists between the Christian religion and that of the orientals, I shall offer a few remarks on the narrative part of what is called the account of the Fall of Man, by which we will be enabled to form a proper estimate of its truth or probability.

It is said that the serpent, being a more subtle or cunning animal than any other beast which the Lord God had made, approached mother Eve, and addressed her in a language which she understood. The dialogue which passed at this *tete-a-tete* is somewhat brief in the book of Genesis; but the learned Dr. Burnet, in his *Archæologia Philosophica*, endeavors to supply the deficiency. He says, "It happened, when Eve at one time was sitting solitary under the tree of knowledge, there came to her a serpent or adder; which, though I know not by what means or power, civilly accosted the woman (if we may judge of the thing by the event) in these words, or to this purpose:

Serpent.—All hail! most fair one. What are you doing so solitary and serious under this shade?

Eve.—I am contemplating the beauty of this tree.

Serpent.—It is truly an agreeable sight, but much pleasanter are the fruits thereof. Have you tasted them, my lady?

Eve.—I have not, because God has forbidden us to eat of this tree.

Serpent.—What do I hear! Who is that God that envies his creatures the innocent delights of Nature? Nothing is sweeter; nothing more wholesome than this very fruit. Why then should he forbid it, unless, indeed, he were in jest?

Eve.—But he has forbid it us on pain of death.

Serpent.—Undoubtedly you mistake his meaning. This tree has nothing that would prove fatal to you, but rather something divine, and above the common influence of Nature.

Eve.—I can give you no answer, but will first go to my husband, and then do as he thinks.

Serpent.—Why should you trouble your husband about such a trifle? Use your own judgment.

Eve.—Let me see—had I best touch it or not? What can be more beautiful than this apple? How sweetly it smells! But, perhaps, it tastes bad.

Serpent.—Believe me—it is worthy to be eaten by the angels themselves. Do but try, and, if it tastes bad, throw it away, and say I am a great deceiver.

Eve.—Well, I'll try then. Thou hast not deceived me: it has, indeed, a most agreeable flavor. Give me another, that I may carry it to my husband.

Serpent.—Very well thought on. Here is another apple for you. Go to your husband with it. Farewell, happy young woman!"

In the recent Travels of Bowdich in Africa, a number of curious traditions are mentioned as existing among the Mandingo Mahometans, one of which relates to the creation and fall of man, which a Marabout repeated to Mrs. Bowdich. By this account it appears, that it was *jealousy* of another female, excited in the bosom of Eve, which led to the fatal catastrophe: God (says this tradition) created Adam of sand, without any soul; and Ybleess, or the great devil, having been made previously, found him lying down, and despised him, saying, "This is mere sand, shall it presume to be a companion for me?" And he spate upon Adam. God hearing this, instantly gave Adam a soul, who rose, and being angry, tried to throw a ball of sand at Ybleess, and said, "I will not serve him." For doing all this, God turned Ybleess out of heaven, but took Adam there, and kept him 300 years, when he created Howa, a woman, for him, and they were permitted to eat of every thing in heaven, but one sort of fruit. Adam knew Ybleess, from the above circumstance, but Howa did not. Ybleess feeling his soul on fire, went and demanded of God payment or reward for all the prayers and good works which he had performed in his previous life. God asked him what pay he wanted. Ybleess replied, "I want company in the fire." God answered, "Go then, and try to make people wicked if you can, but I shall not make people to put them in the fire, for the sake of keeping you company." Ybleess thanked him, and went to Howa, to whom he said, "All the fruit in heaven is good, but this surpasses every other; why then do you not eat of it?" Howa said, "My husband told me not." Ybleess returned, "Your husband deceives you; God never said so, for it is the best fruit of all, and Adam wants it for another woman." "But there is no other woman." "Yes there is; but you have been kept ignorant of her existence." Howa then ate three fruits, and took two more, which she put under the pillow of the bed, and then charged Adam with the other woman. Adam swore it was false; and Howa replied, "Swear not, but eat of this fruit, and I will believe." He began to eat, and God sent Gabriel to prevent him. Gabriel seized Adam by the throat to prevent his swallowing it (which made man have what is called Adam's apple.) God then told Ybleess, if any one met him they might kill him. God called Adam three times, and said, "For this which you have done, I must create one earthly world for your descendants, for you and they will be unfit for heaven now; and you must descend to this earth, where you will find trouble every day, and even that which you think good will prove to be evil. Go to it then." God then sent him a little book called Chosan, and told him to go and wash, and to wash his heart first, then to pray; and said, "You must die, but after death you shall come to heaven."

Whether this or the Bible story should be adopted; or whether we are to believe that it was the beauty and flavor of the fruit, the seducing voice of the tempter, or jealousy of a rival, that predominated in Eve's breast, the whole narrative contains so many absurd and puerile

statements, and displays such ignorance of the laws of Nature, that it is impossible to employ the least reflection on it without rejecting the whole as a silly, senseless fable.

A serpent is made to speak to a woman, as if it were quite a common thing for beasts to talk; and that woman not only was no way surprised at the circumstance, but, as appears by the Bible story, she did not even entertain the least suspicion of the serpent's intention to deceive her; and submitted her reason to a reptile which had been made subject to her, instead of going to her husband to inquire of him as to the propriety or impropriety of what the serpent had said. Dr. Adam Clark, in his Commentary on the 3d chapter of Genesis, has endeavored to prove that Eve was not tempted by a serpent, but by a species of the ourang outang. This, however, does not remove the difficulty, for the ourang outang has not the faculty of speech. According to Josephus, all living creatures, before Adam, ate of the tree of knowledge, and had the same language. Plato says, that in Satan's reign wild beasts could converse together, and also with men, who were like them in primeval purity and native ignorance. Brown, the author of *Religio Medici*, remarks, that there are some who wonder, as well they may, at the simplicity of Eve, "that when the serpent told her the eating of that fruit would make them like gods, she did not question the beast, Why he himself did not eat of it?"

It is, indeed, a matter of surprise, that a being so perfect as man—the workmanship of Omnipotence and Wisdom, that had infused into him a portion of his own divine essence, and pronounced the work superlatively good—should have been so easily deceived by a reptile. Nothing can reconcile the absurdity but a *quantum sufficit* of that grace, which, Christians tell us, is the gift of heaven, but which, it would seem, God has learned from the abuse of his liberality to Adam and Eve, to keep entirely under his own charge, that he may have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and consign to everlasting perdition such as he pleases; and that not for any good or evil that they are capable of performing, but to display his ineffable, incomprehensible, and mysterious workings among the sons of men!

Some, with the view of endeavoring to reconcile the palpable absurdity of a serpent possessing powers of argument sufficient to overcome the scruples of Eve, have resorted to the plea of female weakness. But, supposing that the first woman, notwithstanding what is said about the perfection of her nature, was the weaker vessel, why, I would ask, was she exposed alone to the wiles of the most cunning beast which Deity had thought proper to make? Would it not have been more consistent with justice to have placed some assistant or agent to afford succor, in case of need, to an ignorant, weak woman? She had as yet neither witnessed the rise nor setting of the sun. She had no experience to guide her as to the course she should pursue in relation to the objects with which she was surrounded. According to the Christian theology, the everlasting salvation of all future generations depended on the part she had to act. Was it not, then, the incumbent duty of the being who placed her in a situation of such tremendous responsibility, either to arm her sufficiently to withstand the assault, or to allow her a guard of superior agents? Nothing of the kind was done. This poor, feeble creature, en-

tirely unacquainted with the existence of animals more cunning than herself, was left alone to fall a victim to their subtlety. Even her husband, her natural guardian, helpmate, and protector was purposely kept out of the way, that her defeat might be the more certain.

To be continued.

Strang's Sentence.—We have perused the sentence passed by Judge Duer on the murderer Strang, with feelings of surprise and regret. That a judge, who derives his authority from the civil institutions of the country, should, in pronouncing judgment on a criminal, resort to religion for arguments to make an impression on the mind of the culprit, is, in our apprehension, highly unjustifiable, and bespeaks a disposition so nearly allied to an union of "church and state," that whenever any symptom of this appears, it ought always to be reprobated. In countries where Christianity is "part and portion" of the law of the land, the judges, as a matter of course, exercise the prerogative of enforcing obedience, and of denouncing crime by considerations drawn from the established faith. But, in the United States, where the constitution does not recognize any form of religion, and expressly declares that congress shall not legislate on the subject, every attempt of those holding office to introduce it, or to avail themselves of any of its dogmas, for the purpose of sanctioning, or giving a color to their decisions or proceedings, is a violation of the principles which form one of the brightest features of the Union.

But Judge Duer has not contented himself with innovating on our political institutions. He has unwarrantably and *extra* officially gone out of his road, in order to have an opportunity of denouncing liberal opinions, by endeavoring to create an impression that the wretched man who stood before him to receive sentence was what is called an *infidel*, and that the principles stigmatized by that and other illiberal epithets had been the cause of his moral depravity. His words are, addressing himself to Strang, "*Perhaps* you doubt there is a God; and, from the selfish obstinacy of your conduct, as well as from *reports* founded on your own confessions, which, though *not officially before us*, have, from their notoriety, reached our ears, we fear that your heart has been long since hardened, and your mind darkened into *atheism*; that *infidelity* was the source of an early and intense depravity, and the ultimate cause of your last most aggravated and heinous crime."

It is a maxim, founded on the most obvious principles of law, to say nothing of equity, that a judge who assumes the right to give an opinion, in any case, before hearing the parties, and the witnesses on both sides, can never be regarded as a competent, far less an impartial umpire. By volunteering even an expression favorable to the one party or the other, previous to the close of the trial, he evinces a partiality that unfits him for the important station he holds, and which, in many cases, would be attended with the most mischievous consequences. We do not say, nor do we mean to say, that the judge, on the trial of Strang, displayed any appearance of this nature. On the contrary, we are inclined to believe, from all the accounts that have reached us, that he conducted himself

with the utmost propriety during the whole of the trial. But here his conduct ceases to meet with approbation; for no sooner does he feel himself released from those restraints which the dignity of the office imposes, than he assumes a new character, and launches out in uncalled for declamation against the supposed theological opinions of the prisoner. He does not ask for proofs of Strang's alleged "atheism" or "infidelity." It is with him a *supposition* only; a "*perhaps*;" a rumor, resting on mere "*reports*;" "not officially before us." What right had this judge to tell even the murderer, on such evidence as this, "that infidelity was the source" of his depravity? Who gave him the power of searching the hearts of men, and of tracing their motives to whatever source his own perverted imagination might lead him? Religious fanatics, with their disordered minds, suppose that all liberal men are bloodthirsty monsters; whereas, every truly philosophic person abhors bloodshed, and, in many instances, the shedding of the blood of other animals as human food. A man who exercises his own judgment in matters of religion, must necessarily be of a strong mind, and of a sound intellect—a thinking being, free from all rashness. How impolitic, then, was it in this judge, on a mere surmise, on the vague and idle "reports" of the day, and, confessedly, when the matter was "*not officially*" before him, to wander out of his course, and to pronounce his victim either an atheist or an infidel? And how doubly impolitic and short sighted was it, to attempt to trace the depravity of which a man had been guilty during his whole life, and the enormous crime which had brought him to an untimely end, to the operation of certain principles on his mind, of the existence of which there was not a shadow of evidence?

From the whole complexion of the sentence it is evident, that the judge himself is a fanatic, or that, in this instance, he played the hypocrite to obtain popularity among the fanatics with which he is surrounded. He cants about "the divine mercy," "eternal punishment," the "intercession of the Saviour," and the "influence of the holy spirit," as if these dogmas were settled points; when he ought to have known, or to have acknowledged if he did know, that the basis on which the whole fabric rests is in a tottering condition. Would it not have been a wiser course, instead of telling the wretched criminal that he merited damnation for not believing what are called "gospel truths," to have shown him how far the "gospel" was entitled to that appellation; to have demonstrated, not only to the prisoner, but for the satisfaction of all who heard him, or who might afterwards peruse his address, that the books held sacred among Christians are authentic records, and that every thing they contain is indisputably the word of God? If Strang actually disbelieved the Bible, of what use was it to threaten him with the punishment which it denounces on disbelief? He might as well have been told, that by becoming a Mahometan, or a Hindoo, he would be entitled to a seat in paradise.

The *very merciful* sentiments uttered by the judge, while they strictly coincide with the spirit of that religion which he professes, afford ample room for an exposure, every way calculated to exhibit the folly of endeavoring to perpetuate a system, which, even without being assailed by argument, must fall to the ground through its own absurdity. We shall take an early opportunity of returning to the subject.

Removal.—On *Monday* next the office of the *Correspondent* will be removed to *No. 15 Chamber street*, near the Apprentices' Library.

Printing in all its branches, also *Bookbinding*, neatly and expeditiously executed, on the most reasonable terms. Orders for books, in every department of literature, punctually attended to.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Armenians.—The burying place of the Armenians occupies a space of near an hundred acres, on a hill that overlooks the Bosphorus. The Turks, on the death of a friend, plant a young cypress over his grave; their burying ground therefore consists of extensive groves of these trees, which they reserve exclusively to themselves. The Armenians generally plant on such occasions a tree which yields a resinous gum of a strong aromatic odor, which fills the air, and corrects the exhalations from the graves. They grow to a large size, and form very picturesque objects in a landscape. Their cemetery on the Bosphorus is covered with these trees; and, from its elevated situation, the view it commands, and the view it presents, is perhaps the most interesting grove in the world. Here whole Armenian families, of two or three generations together, are constantly seen sitting round the tombs, and holding visionary communications with their departed friends. According to their belief, the souls of the dead pass into a place called *Gayank*, which is not a purgatory, for they suffer neither pain nor pleasure, but retain a perfect consciousness of the past. From this state they may be delivered by the alms and prayers of the living, which the pious Armenians give liberally for their friends. Easter Monday is the great day on which they assemble for this purpose; but every Sunday, and frequently week days, are devoted to the same object. The priest who accompanies them first proceeds to the tombs, and reads the prayers for the dead, in which he is joined by the family. They then separate into groups, or, singly sitting down by favorite graves, call its inhabitants about them, and, by the help of a strong imagination, really seem to converse with them. This pious and pensive duty being performed with their dead friends, they retire to some pleasant spot near the place, where provisions had been previously brought, and cheerfully enjoy the society of the living.

Gain and Godliness.—There is nothing that sets men more against innovations in matters of religion than when they see that the change of worship would put a stop to their trade, and be "*lucrum cessans, et damnum emergens*," gain sinking and loss rising. What was the cause of the popular commotion, which made that outcry (when St. Paul was preaching) "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians?*" Was it not from the remonstrance of one Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines for Diana, which brought no small gain to the craftsmen? He assembled them and told them, "*Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth;*" and gave them to understand, that not only their profit, but likewise the advantage of the whole city of Ephesus, was concerned not to suffer one Paul, "who

persuaded and turned away many people, saying, they be no gods which are made with hands." Hence we may conclude, that the inhabitants of Ephesus would have been more tractable, with respect to the gospel, if their great Diana could have been taken away without doing any prejudice to their gain.—*Bayle*.

An Infidel's Will.—Mr. J. Thomas Morrison, a surgeon at Vale Grove, in the parish of St. Luke, Chelsea, recently died, leaving a singular will. To his wife he bequeathed *one shilling*; and to various other persons annuities of different amounts, and among others £50 a year to Richard Carlile, the noted bookseller of Fleet street, his wife, and present family, during their natural lives, "holding such character as more creditable than the profession of any creed whatever." To the churches, "whether pagan, Jewish, Christian, or Mahometan, he leaves his Anathema;" and, if this bequest should lead to the exclusion of his remains from the customary burial ground of his parish, he leaves directions to his executors to purchase a rod of earth for his special accommodation. There are other bequests; and, as all the life annuities fall in, directions are given for investing the amount in the hands of trustees, to be distributed to poor housekeepers of the parish of St. Luke, Chelsea, of good moral character, without regard to their religious faith. Mr. Henry Brougham and Mr. Norcott, of Chelsea, are appointed executors, but both these gentlemen have declined acting.

Education.—I have always observed, says the Margravine of Anspach, that young people, when early corrupted, have become cruel and inhuman; their imaginations, fixed on one object alone, refuse admittance to any other; they are strangers to pity, and devoid of feeling; they would sacrifice father and mother to their smallest gratifications. On the contrary, a young man, brought up in happy simplicity, is drawn by Nature towards the tender and affectionate passions in the first moments—his heart is moved by the sorrows of others—he is filled with joy at the sight of his companions—he is alive to the shame of displeasing, and to the regret of having given offence. If his youthful ardor renders him lively, impetuous, or angry, the moment after, his heart, filled with goodness, shows his readiness to repent of his fault, and he would on any terms purchase pardon from those whom he has wounded. His pride humiliates him, from the tenderness of his sentiments. He quickly feels offended with himself, and even, in the height of his indignation, a word or an excuse disarms him. Youth is not the age of hatred or of vengeance; it is that of commiseration, of clemency, of generosity. And I will venture to maintain, that a youth properly brought up, and who has preserved his innocence to twenty, is at that age the most generous, the most amiable, and the best of men. Experience will prove the truth of my maxim.

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MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

INSTRUCTIONS OF THE CHIEF OF THE CAPUCHINS AT RAGUSA, TO BROTHER PEDICULOSO, ON HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE HOLY LAND. BY VOLTAIRE.

Translated for the Correspondent.

The first thing you will do, brother Pediculoso, will be to visit Paradise, where God created Adam and Eve, so well known among the ancient Greeks and Romans, the Persians, the Medes, the Egyptians, and the Syrians, that not a single writer of all those people has ever mentioned it. It will not be difficult to find; for it is situated at the sources of the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Araxes, and the Nile; and though the sources of the Nile and the Euphrates are 1000 leagues from each other, that is nothing: you have only to ask the way of the capuchins at Jerusalem, and you cannot possibly miss it.

Do not forget to eat some of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; for it must be confessed that you are a little stupid and somewhat ill natured: when you shall have eaten of that fruit, you will become a very good and a very wise man. Perhaps you may be uneasy respecting the consequences; for in the book of Genesis it is said expressly, "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" Never fear, my dear brother; but eat away—Adam ate, and lived 930 years afterwards.

As to the serpent, which was "the most subtle of all the beasts of the field," he is chained, you know, somewhere in Upper Egypt: several of our missionaries have seen him. Bochart will tell you what language he spoke in, and the song with which he seduced Eve; but take care that you are not seduced too. Then you will find out the ox that guarded the gate of the garden, for you are of course aware, that *cherub* in Hebrew signifies an ox; and that is the reason why Ezekiel calls the king of Tyre a cherub. Vide St. Ambrose, the abbe Rupert, and, above all, the cherub Calmet.

Examine carefully the mark which the Lord put upon Cain. See whether it is upon the cheek or the shoulder. He deserved to be branded for killing his brother; but, inasmuch as Romulus, Richard III., Louis XI., and hundreds of others have done the same, it is a matter of no great consequence whether the murderer is pardoned or not, especially as the whole race is damned for an apple.

As you intend to push on as far as the city of Enoch, which Cain founded in the land of Nod, you will be particular in ascertaining the ex-

act number of masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, weavers, hat makers, painters, wool carders, laborers, herdsmen and shepherds, handicraftsmen, judges, and gaolers he had in his employ, when there were but four or five persons on the face of the earth.

Enoch was buried in that city which his grandfather Cain built; but he is still alive. Find him out; ask him how he does, and give him our compliments.

From thence you will pass between the legs of the giants who were begotten by the angels upon the daughters of men, and you will present to them the works of the reverend father don Calmet; but be careful to speak civilly to them, for they don't understand raillery.

You will go the top of Mount Ararat to see the remains of the Ark. Ascertain the correctness of its dimensions, as given by the illustrious Le Pelletier. Measure the mountain carefully, and then measure St. Gothard and the Pichincha in Peru. Calculate, with Woodward and Whiston, how many oceans it would take to cover them, and to rise 15 cubits above. You will also have the goodness to bring us, in the original Hebrew, the text which places the deluge in the year of the creation of the world 1656; in the Samaritan, that which says the year 2309, and that of the Septuagint which makes it 2262; and to reconcile these three texts.

Present our respects to our father Noah, who planted the vine. The Greeks and the Asiatics were so unfortunate as to know nothing of him, but the Jews could boast of their descent from him in a right line. Ask him to let you see the covenant which God made with him and the beasts. We are grieved that he should get drunk, and warn you not to follow his example. Above all, get a memorandum of the precise time when Gomer, the grandson of Japhet, began to reign in Europe, which he found thickly peopled. This is a historical fact to verify.

Find out, if you can, what has become of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, so celebrated by the Septuagint, and of whom the Vulgate says nothing. Beg of him to conduct you to the Tower of Babel, and see if the remains of that tower correspond with the dimensions given by the reverend father Kircher.

From the Tower of Babel you will go to Ur in Chaldea, and you will inquire of the descendants of Abraham the potter, why he left that fertile country, to go in search of a tomb at Hebron, and to buy corn at Memphis; why he made his wife pass for his sister, and what he got by that contrivance; but, above all, learn, if you can, what cosmetics she used to make her look handsome at the age of ninety. Ascertain whether she made use of rose or lavender water as a perfume, when she arrived at the courts of the king of Egypt and of the king of Gedar; for these things are essential to our salvation.

You know that the Lord made a contract with Abraham, to give to him and his descendants all the countries from the Nile to the Euphrates. Ascertain the exact reasons why that contract has not been fulfilled.

While you are in Egypt, find out where the horses came from, which Pharaoh sent into the Red Sea in pursuit of the Hebrews; for, all those animals having perished in the sixth and seventh plagues, certain infidels have pretended that Pharaoh had no cavalry. See the book of Exodus,

of which Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Livy, and all the Egyptian writers make such particular mention.

We will say nothing of the exploits of Joshua, the successor of Moses, nor of the moon which he made to stop at midday in the valley of Ajalon, and the sun which stood still upon Gibeon. These are trifles which happen every day, and not worth taking any trouble about.

But there is a matter of infinitely more consequence to morals, and which would contribute essentially to our improvement in honesty, humanity, and justice—I mean the history of the Jewish kings. Ascertain exactly how many assassinations they committed. Some fathers of the church compute them at 580; others, at 970: it is important to know the true amount. You will understand me to allude only to those cases where the murdered were near relatives of the murderers, for, as to the others, they are innumerable. Nothing can be more edifying than a true account of all the murders committed in the name of the Lord: it would serve as an excellent commentary upon the sermons on brotherly love.

When, from the history of the kings, you enter upon that of the prophets, you will enjoy, and cause us to enjoy ineffable pleasures. You will have many inquiries to make, and many explanations to receive; but, when you come to Ezekiel, then will your very soul dilate with joy. First of all, you will see the four animals with the faces of a lion, an ox, an eagle, and a man; then the wheel with four faces, like unto the waters of the sea, (each face having more eyes than Argus,) going upon its four sides and not turning as it went. You know that God commanded the prophet to swallow a whole book of parchment: inquire carefully of all the prophets you meet, what were the contents of that book.

Get Ezekiel to show you the tile upon which he drew a plan of Jerusalem, while he was bound with the bands which the Lord gave him; and to tell you why he was commanded to lie upon his left side 380 days, and then 40 days upon the right.

In reporting your conversations with Ezekiel, be careful, my dear brother, not to alter his words, as you have done: that is a sin against the Holy Ghost. You have said that God commanded the prophet to bake his bread with cow dung; but the Vulgate says, (Ezekiel, chap. iv. v. 12,) "*Comedes illud, et stercone quod egreditur de homine operus illud in oculis eorum.*" "Thou shalt eat it, thou shalt cover it with the ordure which comes out of the body of man." The prophet ate, and cried out "*Pouah! Pouah! Pouah! Domine Deus Mens, ene anima mea non est polluta.*" "Pouah! Pouah! Pouah! Oh, Lord God, I never made such a breakfast in my life." Always be careful to preserve the purity of the text, my dear brother, and do not change it the least tittle.

If the breakfast of Ezekiel was rather filthy, the dinner of the Jews of which he speaks is somewhat cannibalish: "The fathers shall eat their sons, and the sons shall eat their fathers." It is well enough, perhaps, for the fathers to eat their children who are plump and tender; but, for the children to eat their tough, old, stringy fathers, that is a new fashioned cookery.

To be continued.

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE SCRIPTURE BOOKS.

1. There is no known writer who cites, or who appears to have been acquainted with the Pentateuch, the books of Joshua, Judges, Kings, or Chronicles, or with any of the books of the *Old Testament*, until the collection of them, and the Greek translation of that collection, was made under the Ptolemies. The credulous lies of Aristæus, on the 70 interpreters, are well known. If these books were known till then, point out the author who cites them.

2. The anachronisms of the Old Testament noted by Spinoza, Father Simon in his *Critical History*, and collected by Volney in his *New Researches on Ancient History*, p. 53, et sq. of the English translation by Col. Corbet, prove, to a demonstration, that the Old Testament could not have been written till after the times of the kings. Deuteronomy contains passages verbatim from Jeremiah, as Volney has shown.

3. The Prophets, as they are called, must have been written subsequent to the termination of what is called the Babylonish Captivity, for Ezekiel cites Daniel as among the chief of the prophets: "though Noah, Daniel, and Job were with him, saith the Lord," which is again repeated. Daniel was a child when he was carried away into Babylon.

4. Volney shows, clearly, that the Pentateuch was not only unknown to Solomon, (see the dedication of the temple in the book of Kings,) but even to king Josiah, till the 18th year of his reign. The Talmudists, and the Jewish writers generally, ascribe the Pentateuch to Ezra. We know that, according to their own accounts, the Jews were twice carried into captivity, and their city sacked; and, as Ezra says to the Lord, "Lord, thou knowest *the law was burnt.*"

5. The Jews never existed as a nation at all. No writer but of their own nation, and none before Josephus, ever speaks of them as a nation, until subjugated by the Romans. Wythenbach has set this point out of the reach of future controversy.

There is, therefore, actually, no authority whatever existing competent to prove the authenticity of any one of the books of the Old Testament. No writer can be cited for this purpose until the collections made by the Ptolemies for the Alexandrian school; and of these the Greek version, itself resting on no authority, is the only one. That is, there is no authority whatever for them, so ancient as 300 years before Christ. No one can point out when or where they were written, in what language or character, on what material, or by whom. After this, it is useless to investigate the absurdities, contradictions, anachronisms, and other internal evidences of fraud and forgery with which these abominable books abound; for, if they are liable to reasonable suspicion of fraud or forgery in respect of the authors to whom they are attributed, there is an end of the question. They are not evidence as to any fact whatever. What court of justice would admit such a document? I call upon the advocates of Christianity to prove when, where, or by whom any of them were written, by showing that they were known and accredited by any authors of repute near to the time of the events related. If this cannot be shown, the advocates for Christianity must either give up the cause,

or be contented with the reputation of being the defenders willingly and knowingly of fraud, forgery, and imposture. I call upon the clergy, or any of them, to cite their collateral and confirming testimony.

As to the authenticity of the *New Testament*. The four canonical books are ascribed to the apostles Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. If these apostles did not write them, they are forgeries. If there be no sufficient evidence to show that they *did* write them, then no man has a right to assert they did; and in this case they must be considered as forgeries. The argument lies in a nut shell, and I will state it:

During the three first centuries after Christ, about fifty gospels, acts, epistles, &c. &c. were forged, containing as many absurdities at least as we find in the four gospels that are now acknowledged. Most of them are now known only by name. Of the rest, the whole or many fragments may be found in Fabricii Biblioth. Apoc. seu Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti, in Grabe's Spicilegium, in Jones on the Canon, in Lardner, and lately collected in good part in Hone's Apocryphal New Testament, London, 3d edit., 1821. The best list of the spurious gospels is Toland's, as corrected by Jones in his treatise on the Canon, copied into Hone's collection. The ancient fathers of the church were not only addicted to the practice of forgery, but did not scruple to defend it *on principle*; as Eusebius, in a remarkable passage quoted by Gibbon in his reply to Mr. Davis; Origen and Chrysostom also, see Mosheim's Disputations, p. 200—205. The more ancient fathers quote passage from these acknowledged forgeries, and the supposed true gospels, promiscuously. So that a passage cited, without naming the author or the book, proves nothing; for all these forgeries contain very many similar passages. Irenæus, a very silly and superstitious man, died in the year of our era 202. Lardner thinks he wrote somewhat later than 178: say then 180, *our present gospels are first cited by name, by Irenæus*. What should we think of an author who now, for the first time, should cite authorities for facts that happened in the reign of James the second of England, and quote writers as authority who have never been quoted or referred to before? Should we not reasonably inquire, who are the authors in king William's time who have referred to these facts, or who cite these gospels?

Again: were these gospels, even in the days of Irenæus, acknowledged as genuine, and exclusively so, by the great mass of Christians then living? No, they were not; for the *earliest* Christians now known to us, the Ebionites, Nazarenes, and Corinthians, denied any gospel to be genuine but that of Matthew, (excluding the whole account of the miraculous conception, which was not contained in the early copies of St. Matthew, as both Jerome and Epiphanius allow.) Nor were these four gospels generally received as the only authentic gospels till the Council of Nice in 325. During the three first centuries, the great body of Christians, οἱ πολλοί, (the many,) were of the Ebionite persuasion. What credit, then, can be due to books whose genuineness was a subject of incessant doubt, denial, and dispute, during three hundred years?

Again: the language of the Jews, in the time when Christ is supposed to have lived, was a kind of Syriac. Greek was not common among that people. How came, then, these gospels to have been written in

Greek for the use of the Jews, who did not speak Greek? If translated from the Hebrew or Syriac, where are the originals, who translated them, and when were they translated? All, all that is known about them, bears the marks of forgery, fraud, and imposture.

Again: no Jew ever received the name of Jesus Christ. Suppose Jesus to be Joshua, still Christ is the Greek word for anointed: no Jew would use it. Even his existence is matter of doubt. The lying rogues, the fathers of the church, who defended lying and forgery as justifiable methods of furthering a good cause, who forged and falsified the passages in Josephus and Longinus, would do the same without scruple by Pliny and Tacitus. In fact, all the German literati acknowledge that the passage concerning the Christians in Pliny the younger is found in one ancient copy only, and not in the rest. Literature has never known a set of more unprincipled liars and forgers than the ancient Christians, excepting the modern professors of the same sect, not only among the catholics but among the protestants: witness the interpolation in the Lambeth books as to the succession of the bishops, and the forgery of the clause *the church hath power to decide in controversies relating to matters of faith*. Nor was there a set of men that ever existed, known to history, guilty of such abominable and diabolical practices as the Gnostic Christians described by Epiphanius. Yet is modern orthodoxy the child of Gnostic Christianity.

I have not, in this brief review, cited and referred to all my authorities, but I *know* that I have advanced nothing that a man really learned and conversant in this controversy will venture to deny. If it be denied, by any one worthy of notice, I hold myself bound to the proof: but there is no danger. The silly, violent, and ignorant presbyterians know nothing of the controversy. The Episcopalians are equally ignorant, and, being richer, are more idle than the other Christian sects. None of them take the trouble of inquiring into the grounds of their faith, because their motto is "Let well be well." The imposture by which they are enabled to live in plenty carries with it its own evidence to them. But is it worth the while of society to encourage at an enormous expense the class of impostors who live by making dupes of all the rest?

A word or two more as to the New Testament, and I have done. It is a known rule of evidence, that, in all cases whatever, the best evidence the nature of the case will admit of ought to be produced to verify it; for, if inferior evidence be offered, when better evidence can be obtained, it naturally suggests some secret reason why it is withholden. Suppose I offer in evidence the copy of a deed, will not the court say, Why do you not produce the original, or account to us why you keep it back?

The declaration that Jesus would rise from the dead, after three days, was made *in public*: why was the pretended performance made *in private*? It was made before persons who needed that their doubts should be removed: why was it made before women and disciples ready to believe or to assert any thing that made for the credit of their sect? The best evidence the nature of the case would admit of was his public appearance in Jerusalem: why did not this take place? There is but one answer to be given—because the whole story is an imposture, devoid of all truth.

It is in vain to talk of the truth of Christianity, till these formidable objections are satisfactorily answered. Who will take upon him to furnish this satisfactory answer? No clergyman of any sect, rest assured. They know their own cause too well; and they will keep a dignified silence, lest the truth should be too manifest when the question is discussed.

PHILO-VERITAS.

PIETY, PRAYERS, AND PREACHERS.

Mr. Editor—I send you the National Advocate for the Country, of the 24th of July, published by S. S. Conant, containing a wonderful article on the Climate of Georgia, which has no doubt been read with devout attention by many who are in the habit of obtaining their information from the Religious Tract Society. Whether Mr. S. S. C. belongs to the brotherhood, we know not; but conclude, from an examination of his short editorial career, that he would be a very fit member.

Climate of Georgia.—The climate of Georgia, at least in the upper parts of the state, has, for several years back, presented a phenomenon, on which the eyes of the scientific rest with wonder and apprehension. A climate, once so salubrious, and unchecked by any changes of temperature, except by such as were to be looked for in the natural alteration of the seasons, has at length become terrific in its unhealthiness, and faithless in its constancy. One day, we literally freeze; and, on the next, burn under the influence of a vertical sun! The rains have shifted their days of visitation, or fall with the desolating gush of the cataract, when, anon, a sweep of greedy winds shall drink the earth dry of her humidity, and leave her vegetation to languish or to die! The former seasons of the time are no longer known as such, and when the venture is made by the farmer in planting his crop, he can form no possible calculation at what period or in what quantity the harvest may be reaped.

"To what causes are we to ascribe such effects? Do they shoot beyond the ken of human investigation? or are they not to be attributed to our ingratitude and sin? To these exclusively, we believe. The sceptic may smile at this, and the child of inconsideration make it the theme of merriment and derision; but would such a reception of opinion defeat its correctness? Looking to the enjoyments of tomorrow, without one thought bestowed upon the source from whence the means of that enjoyment spring—feeding, with a gluttonous appetite, upon the bounties of an indulgent providence, and yet unthankful to the hand which has so plentifully administered to his wants—*blaspheming* that name, the lisping of which, even in the privilege of prayer, should be done with the profoundest reverence and humility, are evasive, in an eminent degree, of man's ingratitude and sin, and are among the prominent causes of the *change* in our climate of which we have spoken.

"Arrogant, presumptuous, and independent as man may be, when opposed to man, how does the wretch dwindle into dependance and nothingness, when he comes in conflict with his Creator—when deserved by the fostering supervision of his love! Let him remember this, and deprecate a wrath which his conduct may cause to burst with threefold vengeance on his head."

It belongs to fat salaried priests, and even to itinerant preachers, to talk of the wonderful efficacy of prayer; of the imperious duty of keeping holy the Sabbath day; of the merit of erecting meeting houses, and of the paramount obligation of settling ministers to preach and to pray therein. It belongs to such men to denounce every people, country, and individual, who does not attend to their call, even to the very letter of their creed. Fall in with and support their plan of salvation, which seems no less of a temporal than of a spiritual nature, and all Nature shall wear a most smiling and benign aspect. If the drought comes, it is only in trial of the confidence of the faithful; if the thunders roll, and the hail descends, and despoil the husbandman of his prospective wealth, it is still the kind chastisement of a tender parent, who would wean us from the goods of this world. In fine, pay well your minister, and God shall smile upon you in the severest calamities which the seasons produce or the contingencies of life bring about. But, build no meeting houses, where these drones may earn an easy living, by a labor of one day out of seven; refuse to listen to their hypocritical cant, or their more hypocritical and selfish prayers; oppose them in their anxious meetings, and their awakenings, where they lay snares for silly women and for children, and you may be sure that God shall be made to be very angry with you. Every cloud that passes shall bear on its front the power of his displeasure; and every event and every contingency shall bear testimony of his unalterable displeasure and wrath. One might suppose that this was making a great "fuss (as the Jew said, who was caught eating bacon and eggs when a thunder storm arose,) about a little bit of bacon." But it is not about a little bit of bacon—it is about a large bit of bacon, on account of which you hear all this infernal din from the pulpit and the press.

They who build meeting houses, and settle and endow with goodly salaries devout men to address the Divine Majesty for his blessings, are they who disarm of his anger the God of the Christian preacher. The reverend doctor Morse, the geographer, in his travels in the United States, could find no good society where there were not established churches in plenty; and a meeting house, to him, was *prima facie* evidence of good morals. With these feelings, as a minister, he travelled, and with these views, as a geographer, he wrote his account of our country. But, such indications as these, for the ascertainment of the good morals of a district or of a country, remind us of an anecdote of a very Christian traveller, who, after having visited many countries, was at length shipwrecked upon an unknown coast, where neither the footstep nor habitation of man was to be seen. In this situation, he and his companions in distress took their course as chance directed, in search of shelter, and to obtain succor. They travelled all day, and towards night came in view of a gibbet, on which hung a couple of human beings, at sight of which the pious traveller exclaimed, "Thank God, we are in a Christian land! I know it by this sign well enough."

Doctor Morse is gone. Peace be to his ashes. But his writings still live, to do much mischief. The spirit that dictated the above article on the climate of Georgia is of the same sort; but the effort with which it was penned is of no common compass. It moves heaven and earth; and all because prayers and thanksgivings do not ascend to God according,

no doubt, to the ordinances of the church; for how does the writer pretend to know any thing of the secret operations of gratitude, which acknowledge no set form, and which are too deep for human observation. He can mean, therefore, no indication of this, except what hypocrisy has made accessible to the vilest ingrate that ever came to the communion table. "Our soldiers swore terribly in Flanders," said my uncle Toby, and so does this writer on the *Climate of Georgia*. The climate is deranged, and all the springs of health are poisoned, by what this writer considers a neglect of prayer and piety. Of course, then, all matters and things will go right again, and the seasons be restored to their wonted mildness, when the people shall have returned to their "prayer and praise;" when they shall have called in the more pious clergy to be their mediators; and go down on their marrow bones to ask God's forgiveness of their late neglect. Is it not pleasant to think, that the chill winds and fervent heats, which alternately freeze and scorch these poor Georgians, may be so readily softened down by means so accessible to weak man!

If a climate may be thus rendered worse than its natural circumstances indicate, then it follows by a parity of reasoning, that extraordinary piety will meliorate a climate beyond what natural causes may be able to effect. Now, this is the very pleasantest thing of all. Huzza! for piety, prayers, and preachers. We will call to our aid the whole of the Andover and Amherst institutions of *pious literature*; and all the other institutions which have been erected, or are about to be erected, for the education of pious young men for the ministry; and we will pray, and they shall pray; and we shall not fail of having one of the finest and most productive climates that lie between the two tropics, without any of those evils that belong to them. In this, as in all other matters of pure negotiation, we should employ able ambassadors, and give them liberal salaries, that they, on their part, may not be stinting in their exertions for us; and then, depend upon it, our *crops*, our *flocks*, and our *parsons* will not only be protected from harm, but become flourishing, abundant, and happy. One predisposing cause of such a happy result should, however, be mentioned; namely, *faith*, which is of potency to remove mountains. Where the *genuine* sort is to be obtained, or by what sect of religious preachers best propagated, may not be exactly known; but we sincerely hope that the lives of our fellow citizens may not be put in jeopardy in establishing these points.

In the little village of Coxsackie, which lies next north of us, they were blessed, until lately, with a preacher so pious, and so active in "buffeting Satan," and in preaching up and putting in practice this kind of faith, that the devil dared not even show his nose within the limits of his cure. Among his flock, it was a prime business to establish the verity of that faith which is able to contravene the laws of Nature. One day, about two years ago, one of his converts, mowing in a field with many others, some of whom were not converts, they came across a nest of what are vulgarly called bumblebees. The bees were soon out in great numbers, and drove back their invaders. This convert, however, declared, that with faith equal to a grain of mustard seed, (the preacher's own words,) they might all mow forward, undisturbed by the angry insects. Some were disposed to doubt, and asked him to give them a proof of this, which

he as readily attempted to do; but the bees, even less, if possible, attentive to his faith than some of his companions had been before, soon clustered round him, and stung him so severely that he was glad to retreat in the greatest haste, leaving the bees in full possession of their domicile, and the potency of his faith to be proved by some less dangerous undertaking. We therefore repeat our former admonition, that the genuineness of this article, nor its potency in any case, be not tried at the hazard of life or limb. [The preacher here alluded to was Mr. Livingston, who left his congregation in Coxsackie for one in Philadelphia, where he was offered a much higher salary. Many of his congregation in Coxsackie believed his call to Philadelphia to be a very *godly*, but few, we believe, thought it a very *godly* call.]

But, sincerely, I cannot close this letter without an expression of the most sincere regret, that there should be found a single newspaper editor in the United States dupé enough to the interest of the priestcraft to insert such stuff as this on the "Climate of Georgia," without at least remarking, at the same time, on its folly and absurdity. We may be told, but there is little alleviation in the consideration, that there are more hypocrites than dupes among this class of publishers—more that yield to the extraordinary efforts which the clergy are now making, merely because they find it their interest so to do, than there are, who mentally approve what they are called upon to publish.

Athens, August 9th, 1827.

LOOKER ON.

FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

Mr. Editor—I last Sunday attended the meeting of the Free Press Association, and was highly pleased with the lecture which was delivered, as well as the verses or hymns sang upon the occasion, and which, I understand, were composed for the use of the institution. The latter reminded me of the answer, in the time of the French revolution, of the municipality of one of the sections of Paris to a petition of the clergy, praying that mass might be ordered for the benefit of those who fell at the taking of the Bastille; which was as follows: "It is at length time to speak the language of reason: our brethren who perished on the 10th of August have no need of our prayers; the glorious cause in which they were engaged has obliterated all their past crimes, and opened a free passport through the gates of heaven. If you will substitute songs of liberty for the hymns of that ferocious David, that Nero of the Jews, whose least crime was that of assassinating the husband in order with more convenience to sleep with the wife, we will then join you in worshipping the real *God of Nature*." I quote from memory, and am perhaps not perfectly correct. The circumstance is recorded in the British Annual Register. The odes sang at the *Free Press Association* meeting were highly favorable to liberty and morality, and divested of that selfish, uncharitable, malignant cast which peculiarly characterizes the compositions of the Jewish psalmist.

F.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the inconsistencies, absurdities, and contradictions of the Bible.
By the Secretary.

LECTURE FIFTH.

Continued.

Methinks I hear the voice of fanaticism exclaim, "The woman ought to have been more careful. She should not have violated the law which said, 'The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' " I have shown, in a former lecture, that this law, according to Bible history, was enacted *before* Eve had a being; and that it does not appear she was ever told of it either by God or by her husband. But, admitting she had known of its-existence, what idea could she have of the words to "*die*?" If a natural death was meant, how could this inexperienced female, who, as yet, had never seen a dead body either of man or of beast; no, not a dead flower; and had not, with her eyes or mind, even perceived the image of death as presented in sleep—how, I ask, could such a one have any knowledge of what was intended by the threat of death, as a punishment for eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge? But the result showed, that it was not a natural death that was threatened—but a spiritual, eternal death. If, then, Eve could form no conception of the meaning of the word death, supposing it temporal death, how could she know any thing of a doctrine which God did not think fit to reveal (admitting, for the sake of argument, he did reveal it) till after all the people who had lived on the earth for 4000 years were laid in their graves; and which, even with all the pains that Deity itself has taken, since then, to make generally known, is not at this day admitted but by a small portion of the human race; and, even among those who say they believe it, there is not one to be found who can explain it to others, or who understands it himself?

Theologians have an easy way of solving all these difficulties, which appear so insurmountable to reflecting minds. They get rid of them by saying that it was the devil who tempted Eve, and that he only assumed the form or shape of a serpent to effect his purpose. But what authority is there for this? The most attentive perusal of the account given in Genesis no way warrants such an opinion. On the contrary, the writer of that book expressly and distinctly states, that the woman was deceived by the natural craftiness or subtlety of a serpent. But we shall be told that the event was miraculous. Here, again, we ask for proof of this assertion. The occurrence is not said in any part of the Jewish books to have been the result of a miracle. But even were it otherwise, and a passage could be pointed out in the Old Testament, in which the temptation of Eve is represented as the work of a demon or a devil, and not of a serpent, I should still deny the fact. The laws of the physical world are as immutable as God himself, who is believed to be the author of them. To presume, then, that the devil had the power of arresting or violating these

laws, would be to place the Almighty and Satan on an equality, and to cause the latter to usurp the authority of the former. "All the devils of the infernal regions, (says Palmer,) if any there be, have not the power to make a serpent, or any other beast, articulate a single word in manner and form similar to the human voice. Nothing short of the supernatural power of God could give it the power of utterance; nor even this, without involving the divine attributes in absurdity of operation, and inconsistency of character."

However satisfactory this reasoning may appear to those who are accustomed to think, the credulous, and those interested in deceiving them, endeavor to silence the voice of Reason by exclaiming, that nothing is impossible with God; that his power is infinite; that he can do any thing! Granting all this; admitting that God can make a man's nose as large as the spire of St. John's church; does it follow that the Supreme Being would sanction a violation of the immutable principles of justice? In supposing that he did not restrain the devil from deceiving Eve, when he had the power to do this, we accuse him of injustice. In conferring on him omnipotence, and yet admitting that he could not prevent the fall of man, we charge him with impotence; and, in saying that he permitted sin to enter into the world, and created beings capable of committing it, we make him the author of all the wickedness and misery that ever existed on earth, and give the lie to the assertion, that he originally formed man upright, and fitted him for the enjoyment of happiness. Had Adam and Eve been, in reality, the perfect beings represented in the Bible, it would have been impossible for them to have entertained an idea of disobedience; far less to have rendered themselves obnoxious by transgression.

Supposing, for a moment, that God had lent his aid in this case, which is the only means by which the serpent could speak, what consequences would follow? It will be recollected that the violators of the command not to eat a certain fruit were threatened with death. "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." If, therefore, he told them in one place they *should* die, and empowered the serpent, in another place, to tell them they *should not* die, this evidently amounts to a contradiction. It is God *versus* the miraculous power of God; and, what is worse than all, in the character of a deceiver too; for we certainly know, that neither Adam nor Eve died on the day in which they eat the forbidden fruit. If, by dying, something else was meant than the dissolution or disorganization of the body, then it was deceiving with ambiguous language—a conduct utterly inconsistent with the character of purity which we ascribe to Deity.

The Bible account goes on to state, that notwithstanding the penalty attached to eating the forbidden fruit, the woman at first took a view of it, and when she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them were both *opened*, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons." Now, what part of this strange story are we to believe? It first tells us that the woman *saw the tree*, and that it was pleasant to the eyes. From this we should naturally infer, that her vision was

perfect, and that all objects were distinguishable to her sight before she tasted the fruit. Not so, however, if we believe what is said immediately after, that the sight, or the discerning of outward objects, was the consequence of eating that fruit. It was then, and not till then, that the eyes of both were opened, and that they discovered that they were without clothing! What strange contradiction is this! Eve must surely have been very quick sighted when she could see the fruit on the tree with both her eyes shut. Perhaps, like the English lady, about whose extraordinary powers of vision so much was said only a few years ago, the "mother of all living" could discover objects by her finger ends, or by some other means unknown to her descendants. It seems strange, however, that a being who was formed, as it is said Eve was, with every sense in the highest state of perfection, should, after she became degenerate, a fallen creature, possess the faculty of speech in a greater degree than when she was in her previous enviable state; and that this important improvement, this valuable acquisition, should be the instantaneous result of rebellion against a benevolent being, to whom she was indebted for existence and for intelligence.

This, it is presumed, is one of the mysteries of godliness, and not to be explained or understood by vulgar minds. Had we read the same story in another book than the Bible, we should have paused at every period, with our minds full of objections, doubts, and scruples. Such, however, is the force of education—such the preconceived opinions which generally prevail, that it is not the nature of the subject which mankind concern themselves about, or on which they ever allow themselves to reflect. They believe as they have been taught, that the Bible is inspired, and so long as they see no cause to question the veracity of their teachers, they continue through life to place implicit faith in the divinity of the doctrines, however absurd, that are founded on that book. Reason, however, has marked out to itself a line of eternal justice, perfectly consistent with the laws of Nature. Let it then be our constant aim, as the avowed disciples of Nature, to subject to the peaceful and bold inquiries of the mind the fictions of past ages, and they will soon descend to the tomb of oblivion; leaving man in the full exercise of his intellectual powers, and of that happiness for which he was destined, and to which he has a just title.

"*Another Daniel come to Judgment.*"—Since the blustering Hector of the *Antidote*, who proclaimed "*unceasing warfare against the Correspondent*," has lowered his flag, another "soldier of Jesus Christ" has "girt himself with the buckler of faith," and challenged us to enter the lists with him in the same "holy warfare" that proved so disastrous to his pugnacious brother. This champion of "our most holy religion" has entitled the periodical cogitations of his "forth issuing publication," *The Christian and Literary Register*. No place nor terms of publication are mentioned. The former omission, doubtless, has arisen from the circumstance (very common among us editors) of "not having been able, in time, to complete the necessary arrangements;" although, if our memory does not mislead us, *five* months ago it was whispered in our ear, and the whisper has been pretty audibly repeated since, that arrangements

were *then* making to usher this same "Christian and Literary Register" into public notice. As to omitting the *terms*, we are willing to believe that the editor (as all editors have an indisputable right to do) set so high a value on his own lucubrations, that it was only necessary to bring them to market to command any price.

If this new candidate for "editorial fame" had been satisfied with only *one* title to his paper, its character could not have been mistaken; for in almost every column of his editorial remarks, occupying nearly a *third* of his paper, we have ample proof that his pen was guided by the true spirit of a "*Christian*." The words "apostle of infidelity," "desolating doctrines," "infatuated disciples of these heartless doctrines," "cimmarian darkness," "modern illuminati," &c. &c. crowd on one another so closely, that we have found it no way difficult to discover in this "lengthy" and brilliant effusion every thing characteristic of Christianity. But when the "*literary*" merits of the "*Christian*" are sought after, we confess they soar so far beyond our reach, that we have found all attempts to discover them fruitless. As, however, the "Christian and Literary Register" may contain beauties inscrutable to our dim organs of sight, and argument too refined for our dull comprehension, and being desirous that the public may have an opportunity of deciding the momentous question, we have laid a copy of their first number on our table, for the inspection of all who may wish to examine its contents.

Removal.—The office of the *Correspondent* is removed to No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library, where all orders and communications are requested to be forwarded.

Printing in all its branches, also *Bookbinding*, neatly and expeditiously executed on the most reasonable terms.

The following publications may be had as above:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

Paine's Theological Works, 8vo.—\$1 12 1-2 in boards, or \$1 50 handsomely bound and gilt. This is the completest and cheapest edition of the theological works of this great man ever published. A few copies only are remaining.

The Theophilanthropist, containing critical, moral, theological, and literary essays, among which are *The Origin of Evil*, by Soame Jenyns, and *The Morality of Mahometanism*, both scarce and valuable works, 8vo.—\$1 bound.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath Day—37 1-2 cents.

Critical Examination of the Life of St. Paul, from the French of Boulanger—50 cents.

Christianity Unveiled, from the French of Boulanger—50 cents.

* * Orders for books, in every department of literature, punctually attended to.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Who goes to Hell?—It is supposed that there are at this time on the earth 10 million Jews, 170 do. nominal Christians, 140 do. Mahometans, 480 do. pagans, making in all 800 millions of souls, all of which must pass from time to. eternity, in the course of, at least, a century; and something like the same number, or perhaps less, have passed on in like manner for many centuries past, and a number equally great, if not greater, will so continue to pass on, till time shall be no more. The great question, which all the world cannot solve, and which has caused so much uneasy commotion, is—whence came they, whither bound, and to what final end? Now, sir, who, of all the *wiseacres* in the world, and this highly gifted town—women and all, who profess to know all things, both on earth and in heaven, as also in hell, can tell how many of the human family have, from the creation up to the present time, passed through this, on their pilgrimage to the eternal world? and what disposition Almighty God has made of them? The drops of water in the sea, and grains of sand on its shores, would bear no comparison with their numbers; yet it is no less true, that they have lived, died, and have gone—God only knows where. If the doctrine of *partial* salvation, as taught by the orthodox of the present and past ages, be true, what portion of the afore named 800 millions of souls may we conclude go to heaven in the course of a century, (albeit the present,) and what portion are consigned by the avowed sanction of orthodoxy to the torments of a never ending hell? Does one half of those pious souls, whose faces outvie the elongation of the Pharisee's, escape this hell, by means of their own goodness and piety, when tried by the square of their own doctrine? Any one acquainted with their doctrines will readily join me in saying, *not one fourth!!* But, for the sake of the cause of orthodoxy, let us allow *half*, and then see what will be the product of a century, to the parties thus contending for mankind, like vultures for the fallen beasts of the field. By the doctrine of orthodoxy, taking it in its greatest plenitude—

The Pagans must go hell, say	480 millions.
The Mahometans, do.	140 do.
The Jews— <i>headlong</i> , do.	10 do.
The nominal Christians, allow half	85 do.

Making for the Devil in all	715 millions,
And for Almighty God only	85 do.

Thus we dispose of our 800 millions.

Ask orthodoxy if this be true—I say, if it be true, that my statement is likewise true; if not, my statement is false, and only so, because the ground on which it is based is not tenable.

This view of the subject, however near it approach to the true state of orthodoxy, will be objected to by its greatest sticklers—but how will they prove the statement false, without doing violence to the tottering edifice of their doctrine? Will they pretend to say that Christ came to save the world? If so, did he do it? If he did, my statement is really false, and just as every good man would have it—nobody goes to hell. But stop, say they; this will not do; he came to save only those who believe in *church creeds*, make *long prayers*, and give the *reverend clergy* a fourth of their earnings, (the starvation of servants to the contrary notwithstanding,) and those who do not these things must go to hell; for so say the clergy; and who can dare gainsay it? But men died before Christ made his appearance on the earth, and three fourths of the human family, even at this day, die without a knowledge of him. What is to be done in this case? They could not believe in that of which they knew nothing; and, because they believed not these things, which were out of their power, will Almighty God consign them to endless punishment merely for the gratification of a few orthodox sticklers? No, no—this is not the character of that God that created all things after his own liking, with which I trust he is well pleased. Orthodoxy is here brought to her final subterfuge; and to close, as well as possible, the rents in the clerical garments and creed habilaments, they admit that those who know nothing of the light of the gospel may possibly go to heaven, but those who know it and improve it not must be beaten with many stripes and go to hell in the bargain. But again—If this be true, is it not something near the commission of an unpardonable sin, to propagate the knowledge of the gospel throughout the heathen world? as nothing but the knowledge of it can fairly justify the entailment of hell on the ignorant heathens. Justice will surely induce the propagators of this diabolical knowledge to withhold their efforts for some better purpose, as the heathens, and all those who are unacquainted with *gospel light*, go to heaven only because they are such fools that they cannot obtain or understand the means by which they can be gospelized to hell.

Look out, all ye that know these things, and do them not. Obadiah's curse of curses, in all its plenitude, must ever rest on your heads, and, ere long, ye shall be found like water snakes and amphibious animals, swimming in the burning floods and sulphurous lakes of the eternally damned. For you can never take passage direct to heaven by the orthodoxal route of churches, and connecting lines of Bible and *hack character* societies. No, you must go even wild in the very bosom of society, only because you think not of Almighty God as does the most servile empiric in the GREAT EMPRIE of orthodoxy. If a man would court popularity he must do it as he would a female that he might desire to make the partner of his life, but only through the church—and he who presumes to follow a contrary course may rest assured that success can never attend his efforts.—*The Liberalist*.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 6. NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 1, 1827.

Vol. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INSTRUCTIONS OF THE CHIEF OF THE CAPUCHINS AT RAGUSA, TO BROTHER PEDICULOSO, ON HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE HOLY LAND. BY VOLTAIRE.

[Translated for the Correspondent.]

Continued from page 67.

There is great dispute among the learned respecting the 39th chapter of that same Ezekiel. The question is whether it is to the Jews or to the beasts of the field that the Lord promises to give the blood of the princes and the flesh of the warriors for food. We are of opinion that it is to both: the 17th verse is incontestibly in favor of the beasts; but the 18th, 19th, and the following are for the Jews. "You shall eat the horse and his rider." Not only are they to devour the horses, like the Scythians, but also the riders, like worthy Jews as they were. See what it is to have a thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

The most essential passages of Ezekiel, the most advantageous to morals, the best adapted for the edification of the people, and the most efficacious in inspiring the youth of both sexes with modesty and a love of chastity, are those in which the Lord speaks of Aholah and Aholibah, chap. 23d: these admirable texts cannot be read too often.

After a careful examination of those inimitable passages, we would have you lightly to look into Jeremiah, who ran naked throughout Jerusalem, loaded with a pack saddle: but we beg of you not to neglect the prophet Hosea, whom the Lord commanded "to take unto him a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms;" and, some time after, to love an adulteress, and he bought an adulteress for fifteen pieces of silver and a homer of barley and half a homer of barley," chap. 3.

Nothing will contribute more, my dear brother, to form the minds of young persons, than able commentaries on these texts. Do not forget to calculate the value of the fifteen pieces of money: we are of opinion that they will amount to at least seven livres and a half, and you know that the capuchins get girls much cheaper than that.

We will now turn your attention to the New Testament. First you will reconcile the two genealogies of Christ, which you will find the easiest thing in the world to do; for the one is totally different from the other, and it is evident that this is a holy and admirable mystery. The good Calmet says very candidly, in speaking of the two genealogies of of Melchisedech, "*As falsehood always betrays itself, some give his genealogy in one way and some in another.*" "He owns, then," the unbo-

lievers say, "that this enormous difference is an evident proof that the whole story is a lie." Very true, so far as Melchisedech is concerned; for he was only a man; but Jesus Christ was both man and God; of course, therefore, he must have two genealogies.

You will see how it happened that Mary and Joseph took their child into Egypt, according to Matthew, whereas Luke says they remained at Bethlehem; and explain all the other sacred contradictions. Some very pretty things may be said respecting the water changed into wine at the wedding of Cana, when the guests were all drunk, for John, the only one of the apostles who speaks of it, says expressly that they were: "*et cum inebriate fuerint,*" says the Vulgate. You had better read the "*Questions of Zapata,*" upon the massacre of the innocents by Herod; upon the star of the three kings; and upon the fig tree that was blasted for not bearing fruit, "when it was not the time for figs," as the text says. The ham cures of Westphalia are surprised that Jesus should have sent the devil into the bodies of 2000 swine, particularly as there were no swine in Judea: they say that if he had given them the swine, instead of sending the devil to them, they would have made more than 20,000 florins by them; that is, supposing they were fat.

When you shall have made these things all clear, we recommend to you, most earnestly, to set about a vindication of Luke, who, having been the last among the evangelists who wrote, and of course better informed than the rest of them, as he says, ought to be received with great respect. This respectable Luke assures us, that when Mary was ready to lie in, Cæsar Augustus commanded (in order that the prophecies might be fulfilled) a census to be taken of all the inhabitants of the world, and that Quirinus, governor of Syria, published that edict in Judea. Certain infidels, who unluckily are learned men, pretend that there is not a word of truth in this story; that Augustus never issued so ridiculous and extravagant an order; that Quirinus was not governor of Syria until ten years after the confinement of Mary; and that Luke was in all likelihood a blockhead, who, having heard that a census of Rome was made in the time of Augustus, and that Quirinus was governor of Syria after Varus, confounds events and dates; that he talks like a country booby, ignorant of what passes in the capital, and yet has the vanity to say that he is better informed than other people.

This is what the impious say; but do not heed them: think and speak only as the pious think and speak, and, above all, do not forget to read those questions I have mentioned; they will clear up these difficulties, as well as all others: perhaps there is not one of them that might not puzzle a capuchin; but, with the grace of God for help, every thing may be explained.

Do not fail to inform us, if you meet in your travels with any of those wretches who think lightly of the transubstantiation, of the ascension, the assumption, the annunciation, and the inquisition, and who satisfy themselves with believing in God, with worshipping him in spirit and in truth, and with acting uprightly. You will easily recognize these monsters: they only aim at being good subjects, good sons, good husbands, and good fathers; they give alms to the poor, and none to the capuchins. There is no true religion but that which gives millions to the pope, and

abundant alms to the capuchins. Finally, I commend myself to your prayers, and to those of the sacred little people who inhabit your venerable beard.

APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS.

Continued from page 53.

Then Nero, full of wrath, saith to Agrippa, his prefect, It is necessary that these irreligious men suffer a cruel death; therefore, having bound them in chains of iron, let them be thrown into the basin made use of for naval combats; for it is right that men of this sort perish miserably.

Agrippa.—Most sacred emperor, the punishment thou adjudgest to them is not equitable.

Nero.—How not equitable?

Agrippa.—Because Paul appears to be innocent; but Peter, who hath caused the death of a man, ought to suffer severe torture.

Nero.—After what manner, then, should they die?

Agrippa.—As it seemeth to me, it is just that the irreligious Paul should lose his head; and Peter, who hath besides caused the death of a man, let him be crucified.

Nero.—Thou hast judged well.

And immediately Peter and Paul were brought into the presence of Nero. Paul was beheaded in the Ostian way; but Peter, approaching his cross, said, Because my Lord Jesus Christ descended from heaven to earth, he hath been crucified erect on the cross; but I, who have been thought worthy to be called by the cross from earth to heaven, ought to have my head placed nearest the earth, and my feet directed towards heaven: and, as I am not worthy of the same crucifixion as my Lord, turn my cross, and crucify me with my head downwards.

So they inverted the cross, and fixed his feet upwards, and his hands downwards.

And there assembled in that place an innumerable multitude of people, who exclaimed against Nero, and carried their indignation so far that they willingly would have hurt Nero himself. But Peter hindered them, saying, Take heed, my little children, that ye do not this thing, but hearken rather to what I shall say to you; for, not many days ago, at the supplication of the brethren, I departed hence, and my Lord Jesus Christ met me at the gate of this city; and I worshipped him, and asked him, Lord whither goest thou? And he said to me, Follow me, for I am going to Rome to be a second time crucified. And whilst I followed him, and returned towards Rome, he said to me, Fear not, for I am with thee until the time when I shall introduce thee into the house of my father. For this reason, my little children, be careful not to hinder my departure. My feet already tread the heavenly way. Sorrow not, but rejoice with me, for this day I obtain the reward of my works. And after he had spoken these words, he said, I give thee thanks, good master, that the sheep thou hath given me have compassion on me. I desire that they may be partakers also with me in thy favor. To thee I commend the sheep thou hast confided unto me, to the end that, in possessing thee, they

feel not that they are without me; and I pray that thou wouldst always succor them, with thy aid, O Lord Jesus Christ, by whom I have been able to govern this multitude.

And, saying this, he gave up the ghost. And immediately there appeared holy men, whom no one had seen before, and none have been able to see since; for they affirmed that it was on account of these two that they had come from Jerusalem. And, accompanied by Marcellus, an illustrious man who had believed, and, leaving Simon, had become the follower of Peter, they bore away his body in secrecy, and deposited it at the Terebinthine place, near the canal on which naval combats were exhibited, in that part which is called the Vatican.

Now those men, who said they had arrived from Jerusalem, said to the people, Rejoice with exceeding great joy, inasmuch as ye have been found worthy of so great teachers, the friends of our Lord Jesus Christ. For know that this most execrable Nero, after the death of the apostles, shall not be able to preserve his kingdom.

And it came to pass, after that time, Nero incurred the hatred of his army, and of the Roman people, in such sort that they resolved on publicly beheading him. Having been informed of this plot, he was seized with so great trembling, and such insupportable terror, that he fled thence, and appeared not afterwards. There were some who said that as he wandered through the forests in his flight, he perished from hunger and thirst, and was devoured by wolves.

And when the Greeks bore away the bodies of the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, to carry them into the east, there happened a great earthquake, and the Roman people ran, and they arrested the bodies at the place called the Catacombs, at the third mile stone on the Appian way. And they were kept there a year and seven months, until the time that places were prepared for them; and there they were received with due honor and reverence, and with praises of hymns.

And the body of the most blessed Peter was placed in the Vatican of naval combats, and that of Paul two miles on the Ostian way; where those who earnestly and faithfully seek receive the benefit of their prayers, for the praise and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns, for ever and ever. Amen.

I, Marcellus, the disciple of my master, the apostle Peter, have written these things which I have seen.

HISTORY OF SAMUEL.

Continued from page 39.

Saul, dismissed by Samuel, met the procession of prophets, and at sight of the train, seized with the spirit of God, he set himself to prophesy with them. The people inquired if Saul had become a prophet. Those who knew it, asked, what has happened to the son of Kish to have also become a prophet? Others observed, what is their father to them? His father-in-law having questioned him on the details of his journey, Saul told him all, except the affair of the royalty. Behold then a connivance between Saul and Samuel.

There remained a public scene to play to gain the respect and credulity of the people. For this purpose, Samuel convoked at Maspha a general assembly. After some reproaches on the part of God, (for nothing can be done without his name,) You wish to have, says he, another king than your God; you shall have him. In the mean time he began to draw by lot the twelve tribes of Israel, to know from which tribe should issue their king. The lot fell upon the tribe of Benjamin: he drew them by lot, and the lot fell upon the family of Matri; and, finally, on the person of Saul. Assuredly if there is any juggling, it is that of drawing lots on a thing already determined. As to the trick of directing the lot, we know that it requires but very little address to play the slight of hand; it has been seen every where; we yet see examples of it. In this time of civilization, has not France seen her five directors drawing lots as to who should withdraw from office, when it was already agreed on among themselves? In consideration of a hundred thousand francs, a carriage drawn by two good horses, and the brevet of an office, the chosen one would not fail, from among the five balls of ivory put into the urn, to take that which was warm, and the world would be edified.

It was necessary that the Hebrew people should believe that God himself had made choice of Saul, in order that this choice might impose obedience upon all, and respect to the malecontents, which the opposition had not yet let be seen. By an addition to the jugglery, Saul was not present: it is clear that Samuel had concealed him; they seek him; they soon find him in the hiding place which the seer had the merit of divining. The people were surprised to see so fine a man, and, according to the literal account, they cried, "God save the king." Then Samuel read to the people the statutes of the kingdom, and he wrote them in a book, which he deposited, without doubt, in the temple. After the ceremony, the people were dismissed. Saul returned to his house at his farm; and, to form an army, he assembled around him men whose hearts God had touched; that is, the sycophants and partisans of Samuel; but the evil ones exclaimed, What! is this he who is to save us? And they carried him no presents.

These last expressions point out a party of malcontents. Their spirit and tone of disdain indicate the low rank and condition in which Saul was born, and perhaps, also, the mediocrity of his talents, already known to his neighbors, without exposing a secret infirmity which we shall soon see developed. We perceive, then, that these malcontents were of a class distinguished by birth and by wealth, who are in the text denominated "evil ones," because the writer was a believer, a devotee, imbued with the ideas of the priest, his hero, and that of the superstitious majority of the nation.

The book of royal statutes, written by Samuel, is worthy of some attention. The Hebrew word *mashfat*, by which it is designated, signifies sentence rendered—law imposed. What was this law, this constitution of royalty? The answer is not doubtful. It was the same *mashfat* mentioned in the 8th chapter and 11th verse, where Samuel, being angry, says to the people, Here is the *mashfat* of the king, who will reign over you: he will take your children; he will employ them in the service of his chariots and his horses; they will run before him and before his cha-

riots of war; he will make them captains over thousands and captains of fifties; he will employ them as laborers in his fields, to gather his harvest, to make his instruments of war, and his chariots. He will take your daughters, and make them perfumers (or washerwomen,) his cooks, and his bakers. He will take your corn fields, your olive orchards, and your vineyards; he will give them to his servants; he will take the tenth of your grain and of your wine to give to his eunuchs and servants; he will take away your slaves, male and female, as well as your asses; and the best of your goods will be for his use; he will decimate your cattle, and of your own persons he will make slaves.

Those will be deceived who take this for menaces only. It is simply the picture of what passed among the neighboring people who had kings. It is an instructive sketch of the civil, political, and military state of those times, where we see chariots, slaves, eunuchs, tithes, tillages of different kinds, companies and battalions of thousands and fifties, &c. as in latter periods. Such were the evils resulting from the theocratic regime, or government of priests in the name of God, that the Hebrews preferred to it a military despotism, concentrated in a single person; who, at home, had the power of maintaining peace, and, abroad, to repel aggression, and the intrusion of strangers.

If Samuel had been a just man, he would, in establishing the rights of the king, have also fixed the balance of his duties, what constituted the rights of the people: he would have imposed upon him, as is practised in Egypt, the duties of temperance in all things, of abstinence from luxury, of repressing his passions, of overseeing his agents, of discountenancing flatterers, of resolution to punish, and of impartiality to judge between his subjects. But the priest Samuel was irritated at having wrested from him the sceptre which his knavery had obtained. The most to be regretted in this affair is, that Saul was not endowed with sufficient means or sufficient spirit to counteract this perfidious protector. He could, by feigning to hold Samuel strictly to his order, by obliging him to explain it clearly, have thrown back upon him the checks which he imposed, and thus, in the eyes of the people, he would have had the merit of liberating them. David did not fail; but Saul, altogether a brave warrior, and not suspecting the policy of the temple, became the dupe and the victim of a consummate machiavelism.

According to Samuel, the royal statute was a pure and severe despotism, a genuine tyranny: According to Moses, it was quite another thing. To be convinced of this, it is sufficient to read the precept recorded in the 17th chapter of Deuteronomy, verse 14, &c. It says, literally, "When you shall have entered into the land which Jehovah your God has given you, and which you shall possess and inhabit, and you shall say, I will establish over me a king like all the people that surround me, you shall establish him who shall choose Jehovah your God; you shall take him from among your brethren (Jews;) you shall not take a stranger, who is not your brother; and this king shall not possess many horses; he shall not make the people return to Egypt to have many horses; he shall not multiply wives, that his heart turn not away; he shall not amass treasures of gold and silver, and when he shall sit upon the throne he shall write for himself a copy of the law in a book, before the priests and the Le-

vites, and this copy shall be in his hands; he shall read it every day of his life, to learn to fear Jehovah his God, and to practise all his precepts." What a difference between this statute of Moses and that of Samuel! Mark well the words: the king shall be one of your brethren, a man entirely as one of you; and he shall be submissive to the will of the nation. How happens it that Samuel was not intimate with, or did not mention, a single word of an ordinance of the legislator so precise and radical? How was it that no person made the least mention of it? Was this law of Moses unknown or forgotten? or was it by some chance not yet inserted? There are reasonable suspicions in this respect. Able critics have already remarked, that in the Pentateuch more than thirty passages are manifestly posterior to Moses, and posterior by several centuries.

What is said about the king not possessing many horses; not taking many wives; nor amassing treasures of gold and silver, nor going astray in his heart (from the ways of Jehovah,) alludes so directly to the sins of Solomon, that it affords an additional proof of its being posthumous. Moreover, the words "when you shall possess the land (of promise,) and you shall say, I will establish over me a king, like all the other people," are so much the picture of what happened under Samuel, that we have a right to take them for a historical account, metamorphosed afterward into a prophecy. Who has ever made mention of any Jewish king having copied the law with his own hand, or who had for regent and tutor a high priest, whom such an office would suit admirably? If it was a precept of Moses, how was it forgotten by Samuel, not only a prophet but a chief judge? Are there not here sufficiently powerful arguments in favor of those who maintain that the Pentateuch is a late composition, and anterior to the Babylonish captivity?

To be continued.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH. BY C. SCHULTZ.

Continued from page 55.

77. Another fact is, that some learned Christians in Hindostan have accidentally discovered a record which states, that the ancient Egyptians sent their priests to India, in order to be instructed in the arts and sciences by the Brahmins. We have, therefore, proved the following most important facts, as the ground work for our conclusions: 1st, the Hindoos are the most ancient of all the nations; 2d, that Brahma is the oldest author or legislator known on this globe; 3d, that the writings of Brahma were carried into Egypt ages before Moses was born; and 4th, that as Moses was an Egyptian, and partly initiated into their mysteries, he must have had access to copies or extracts from the Shaster of Brahma; and these last we are prepared to prove in our Review of Noah.

78. But that is almost unnecessary, for the fact is, as soon as the priests were convinced that Brahma was the oldest author and legislator, and that some parts of the two Bibles were so near alike that Moses could not escape being stigmatized as a plagiarist, they then set their "inspiration" room to work, in order to weave out some kind of an excuse, and, finally, produced the following: If Brahma stole nothing from Moses, nei-

ther did Moses steal aught from Brahma, for God permitted the history of those ancient times to reach us in two ways; one was through the corrupt medium of tradition, which the Hindoos received; and the other, a later and more correct account, through the medium of "inspiration!"

79. It is a fact, that the ancient Hindoos were the most benevolent, most moral, and most enlightened nation on the globe; while the Jews, on the contrary, were the most cruel, immoral, and ignorant of all! We therefore marvel much, whether the same God presides over nations at this day; or, whether the same principles influence him as formerly.

80. It is a fact, that all the Christians, from the pope and archbishops down to the beggar, daily exclaim, "that man was unable ever to arrive at the knowledge of the unity of God, or of the immortality of the soul and a future state of rewards and punishments, without the aid of 'inspiration.'" If so, then is Brahma also an "inspired" writer, for he was the first author or legislator who ever pronounced those doctrines.

81. It is a fact, and, the most important of all we can collect, in order to open the eyes of the people, that there was not a single doctrine adopted by the Jewish church, (except their cruel and bloody ones,) or by the Christian church, not even excepting a single precept of morality, but what were all taught by Brahma about 1400 years before Moses.

The following paragraph will be found to contain upwards of twenty historical facts within itself:

For our cosmogony, fall of man, redemption, deluge, free agency, restoration, incarnation, immortality of the soul, future rewards and punishments, heaven and hell, desolation of all things, universal restoration, &c., as also the unity, trinity, spirituality, invincibility, eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and omni-benevolence of God are all derived from the Shaster of Brahma. And not only these attributes of the Deity, but even your baptism, as well as your precept of morality, may be all traced to the same high and indisputable Indian origin, even down to Moses's system of unclean things, division into tribes or casts, and obstinate refusal to intermarry with any other nation or religion "even to this day!"

105. It is a fact, that when man was buried in the most abject ignorance and superstition, too ignorant even to doubt, then miracles were to be seen every day; but the moment philosophy made her appearance, and enabled man to doubt as well as detect all miracles, then they vanished altogether, and that precisely at the time when they became most necessary.

106. It is a fact, that wherever ignorance and superstition predominate, even at this day, there miracles flourish as plentiful as ever.

107. It is a fact, that as the catholic Christians are more ignorant and superstitious than the rest, so the only Christian miracles are confined to them alone.

108. It is a fact, that as all the uncivilized nations on this globe are buried in a similar happy state of ignorance, they all enjoy the blessings of miracles accordingly.

109. It is a fact, that at the time of the apostles there were thousands and "legions" of devils on earth, possessing and harrassing as many poor mortals. What has become of that generation of immortal demons? Your priests inform you, that when Christ descended into hell, he chained

or locked up all the devils in the bottomless pit. But your volume gives the lie to all such pretensions, because devils were as plenty as ever after he went to heaven. The following statement of facts, however, will explain this mystery.

110. For it is well known, that in those ignorant and superstitious days there were no regular physicians or surgeons, and that priests undertook to cure all with prayers. Of course, very few of the hundreds of diseases which afflict mankind could be known; accordingly, every evil thing was then attributed to evil demons or devils; and every unknown or incurable malady, as well as those subject to faintings, fits, convulsions, hysterics, or insanity, were all supposed to be "possessed of a devil." And what a glorious harvest for miracles such a state of things produced your apostles amply testify.

111. It is a fact, that every religion, except theism and deism, are founded on miracles, and, therefore, they must be considered as the poorest of all testimony that can be offered in favor of any religion.

112. It is a fact, that theism is the first true religion of man; and if there is only one true God, it is self evident that there never can be more than one free religion.

113. It is a fact, that your systems admit of three true religions, if not an hundred in variety.

114. It is a fact, that every religion of a mortal origin will undergo many changes.

115. It is a fact, that your religion has undergone many changes, both as to what books compose your "word of God," as well as to your principal doctrines; and, therefore, proves, beyond all doubt, that your religion cannot be a true one.

116. It is a fact, that your newest sect is the most numerous in this country; and also, that the unitarians have given the death blow to Christianity here, for they have demolished two of the principal pillars which supported it.

117. It is a fact, that the absurd doctrines of Luther, and particularly the damnable doctrines of Calvin, have driven more to embrace deism than the writings of any deist.

118. It is a solitary but a glorious fact, that the ancient Hindoos never persecuted any person, or shed a drop of blood for their religion's sake.

119. It is a universal and melancholy fact, that the Jews and Christians never ceased to persecute every other person on account of a difference in religion; and they have burned and murdered millions of millions of their innocent fellow creatures for the honor and glory of God, Jesus Christ, and the Virgin Mary! Such are the fruits produced by a prieststridden people.

120. It is a fact, that every priesthood has proved to be a corps of systematic persecutors; and that publicly in Europe, Asia, and Africa, but privately in this country.

121. It is a fact, that no priest ever was a friend to a free and impartial press.

122. It is a fact, that no priest ever will be a friend to the most virtuous man in society, if he is so candid and honorable as to avow any conscientious doubts concerning the Bible.

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1827.

Execution of Strang.—By the Albany papers I learn, that this wretched culprit has been put to death, in cold blood, by men professing to be influenced by, and imitators of a God of mercy. Out of thirty thousand spectators, "one fifth of whom were females," it is said, "that there were *few* to regret his fate—*none* to deny the righteousness of the law." I do not believe this. Wicked and hard hearted as mankind have become, in consequence of the prevalence of error, it is impossible to imagine, that thirty thousand people could have been so steeled against the feelings of humanity, so insensible to the voice of nature, as to stand by unmoved, while a fellow being was unresistingly tied up by the neck, and actually strangled like a ravenous beast, when it was in the power of his executioners to have mitigated the barbarous sentence. Atrocious as was the crime committed, I am confident that more than four fifths of the males, and all the females, had they been called on at the fatal moment to express their actual feelings, they would have declared against the execution, and in favor of a less sanguinary punishment. The scribbler who has asserted to the contrary, has been guilty of an atrocious libel on human nature, indicating not only a want of sympathy, but a deplorable deficiency as to what constitutes a correct knowledge of the human mind.

As I anticipated, the gratuitous assertion of the judge, that Strang was an "infidel," and "athiest," has been completely rebutted by the conduct and declarations of the criminal himself. He was attended by clergymen; listened with attention to their admonitions; joined, with fervor, in their devotions; and died as sincere a Christian as any of its most flaming professors. Had it been otherwise; had Strang really been an unbeliever in revelation, he must have adopted this opinion on unquestionable evidence. Nor could he abandon, at pleasure, principles forced into his mind by a train of reasoning and demonstration, amounting to absolute certainty—he must have died as he lived, maintaining those opinions only which he believed to be founded in truth. The accounts in the Albany papers do not even insinuate that Strang had ever entertained a single doubt as to religion. After the very pointed manner in which he was addressed by the judge, no means would have been left untried to ascertain the fact; and, considering the awful situation in which he was placed, no good reason can be assigned for his concealing it, if it had been true that he was an unbeliever. How inexcusable then was it to hazard even a surmise on a subject which could not benefit the criminal nor society, though every way calculated to aggravate the horrors of his condition, and more powerfully excite a thirst for human blood.

Among the number of passages in the Old and New Testament, directly authorizing cruelty and murder, that contained in the ninth chapter of Genesis is principally relied on by Christians, as affording an ample justification for dispensing with the observance of the charitable and for-

bearing maxims said to have been taught by the founder of their religion. —“Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed,” is, we are told, the irrevocable decree of heaven; the stern and unalterable mandate, which, according to fanaticism, proceeded from the same source that, in latter ages, proclaimed “peace on earth, and good will to man.” It is in vain to point out to these men of blood, that it appears from their own books, that the first man who committed murder, was not punished with death; that a mark was merely put on his forehead to denote his being a criminal; and that in the narrative which their own historian has given of the death of Abel, whether true or false, he evidently intended to show, that instead of exacting “blood for blood,” the great judge of all *spared* the life of the murderer; rendering it, however, a perpetual burden, and himself an object of abhorrence to all the world; and that, foreseeing this salutary mode of punishment might be defeated by the mistaken policy of man, the same impartial judge denounced a heavy punishment on any one who would destroy the life of Cain. This example has no weight with, nor can it be expected to influence the minds of men who have been taught to regard Deity as a sanguinary being, who could not be pacified until he had shed the blood of his “only beloved son.” Here, indeed, Christians are no way backward in imitating their ferocious deity. Instead of endeavoring, by kindness, to reform their fellow men, who, through their own corrupt institutions, have become amenable to their Draco laws, nothing will satisfy them short of a public expiation on the gallows. In this conformity to the example of their God, they imagine that they merit the kingdom of heaven.

Although nothing can be looked for from fanaticism tending to humanize our criminal code, it might have been expected, in a country like this, where knowledge has made such rapid advances, and where the modification of the laws is in the hands of the people, that some efforts would have been made to put an end to capital punishments. From the great number of murders, which appear by the numerous trials to be perpetrated, it is evident that the infliction of death, for that crime, does not operate as an example to deter others from its commission. Although this mode of punishment has been for thousands of years resorted to in England, we do not find the people there deterred by it from yielding to a propensity to raise their hands against the life of their fellows. In that country, emphatically called the “bulwark of our holy religion,” there are two hundred and twenty-three offences which are visited by the penalty of death. But this severity, instead of exterminating crime, every where increases it. “The punishment of death,” says Beccaria, “is pernicious to society from the example of barbarity, it affords.” “Barbarous spectacles of human agony,” observes Paley, “are justly found fault with, as tending to harden and deprave public feelings, and to destroy that sympathy with which the sufferings of our fellow creatures ought always to be seen; or if no effect of this kind follow from them, they counteract, in some measure, their own design, by sinking men's abhorrence of the crime into commiseration of the criminal.” Blackstone, also, after lamenting over the “dreadful list of capital crimes” in England, states, that they are so numerous, “instead of diminishing, they increase the number of offences.”

Who has witnessed a public execution, and examined the countenances of the multitudes usually assembled on these occasions, but must have observed an universal feeling of sorrow for the untimely death of the sufferer; indications of a heaviness of heart that seemed reflected from every one to his neighbor? If the unfortunate culprit seemed to meet his fate with fortitude, the admiration this excited obliterated detestation for his crime; if he appeared insensible to his situation, this removed, instead of exciting terror; and if he discovered distress of mind, sympathy, and a desire to relieve it pervaded every bosom. There may be a few exceptions to this; but they can only appear when the individuals are hardened with vice, or when they are too young or too ignorant to form a proper estimate of the scene passing before them. The effect then becomes highly pernicious; punishment appears a mere arbitrary act of cruelty, and the passive behavior of the sufferer indicates innocence rather than crime. A disposition to exercise the same arbitrary cruelty is immediately created, and we not unfrequently find pick-pockets under the gallows, and highway robberies committed in sight of a gibbet. To the virtuous, then, a public execution is a source of deep regret, and, not unfrequently, of bitter and awful recollection during the rest of their lives. To the wicked, it furnishes fresh motives for continuing their wickedness, hardens their hearts, familiarizes them with blood, and hurries them on to the perpetration of the most barbarous crimes. In a few weeks, the execution is recollected only as a common occurrence by the general mass. A murder is soon after committed—the same scene is repeated, lamented, followed by the same ruinous consequences, and again forgotten.

These barbarous exhibitions are, moreover, productive of a gradual aversion to the laws, and calculated to rouse public indignation against those who are engaged in their execution; they eradicate all the manly sentiments of those who are accustomed to witness them, render nations dastardly and contemptible, and lead to the suppression of freedom. In France, though the punishment of death is not abolished, it is restricted to but a small number of offences; and it is no less remarkable than true, that murder, which is one of those offences, and for which death is almost invariably inflicted, is more common than any other capital crime. In those countries where forgery is never punished with death, we seldom hear of its being committed. But, in England, where it is never pardoned, it occurs almost every day; and this not among the ignorant and lower classes, but among men of education, and of the first standing in society.

How is it possible to resist the inference forced on us by these facts, that man is not a creature to be coerced; that nature has implanted in his breast so great a repugnance to violence, that he will always be found in a state of opposition, or defiance, even where he is conscious that the magistrate, by resorting to severity, aims at nothing more than the correction of a crime which he knows he has committed.

All our experience has shown, and the history of nations has demonstrated, that sanguinary punishments, so far from eradicating crime, have uniformly had a contrary tendency. For what purpose, then, is the practice to be continued? Why do those appalling and disgraceful sights,

which are multiplying yearly among us, continue to be exhibited? Are we so wedded to precedents, so much in love with a barbarous code, merely because it claims the sanction of authority, that we must perpetuate it at the useless sacrifice of life, of every noble feeling of humanity, and of general utility? I hope not. I am satisfied that at least nine tenths of the nation are opposed to capital punishments; and it only remains for this vast majority to raise its voice, in order to have the obnoxious law expunged from our penal codes.

If the punishment of death does not, and cannot operate as an example to deter others from the commission of crime, neither does it operate beneficially on the unfortunate wretch on whom sentence has been passed. When we consider that criminals, under sentence of death for even the worst crimes, never give up the hope of obtaining a pardon, or a mitigation of the punishment, until the moment of execution arrives, we are compelled to believe, that the generality of offenders who are placed in this awful situation, are never truly penitent, and resigned to their fate. Charity might induce us to think otherwise, were it not that facts of an indisputable nature lead to an opposite conclusion. Dr. Forde, the ordinary of Newgate, having been requested by Mr. Bentham to communicate his views on this subject, felt no hesitation in declaring, from what he had witnessed for a series of years, "that the execution of a criminal was never viewed by him as a punishment for his misdeeds, or caused him to set about the necessary work of repentance."

Even in cases where symptoms of contrition seemed to arise in the breasts of some few under sentence, Dr. Forde says, that he did not recollect an instance, after a respite had come to these people, of one who did not *almost immediately* forget all his good resolutions. "Nay," he continues, "I will take upon me to say, that some of the most wicked prisoners who are now in Newgate, have been under sentence of death. One instance let me mention of a man who was in that predicament, and who gave *every* hope of reformation. It was an arduous matter to get him respited; but it was done. He was removed from the cells, and his punishment mitigated to transportation. Meeting me a few days afterwards, he said, 'Here are the books you so kindly lent me; and *having no farther use for them*, I return them with my thanks.'"

How, indeed, can it be otherwise, when, as is so well known, the principal part of the education of these wretched beings while pursuing their career of guilt, is to harden their minds against the fear of death, which they consider as only "a bad half hour," a momentary struggle, and all is over. The desire most predominant with them, is to maintain the good opinion of their former associates, and this they can only do by appearing to brave punishment, to leave behind them the reputation of having displayed that fortitude so greatly prized, and so often to be met with in the ranks of villany. They are as ambitious to be considered martyrs in the eyes of their confederates, as those who suffer in the most virtuous cause.

Much of that solemn parade usually attending on public executions, particularly in this country, has also a pernicious effect on the criminal, as well as those who witness it. "The sufferer," to use the language of Mr. Livingston, of Louisiana, "whatever be his crime, becomes a hero

or a saint ; he is the object of public attention, curiosity, admiration, and pity. Charity supplies all his wants, and religion proves her power by exhibiting the outcast and murderer, though unworthy to enjoy existence on earth, yet purified from the stain of his vices and crimes, converted by her agency into an accepted candidate for the happiness of heaven ; he is lifted above the fear of death by the exhortations and prayers of the pious ; the converted sinner receives the tender attentions of respectability, beauty, and worth ; his prison becomes a place of pilgrimage ; its tenant, awaiting the crown of martyrdom ; his last looks are watched with affectionate solicitude ; his last words are carefully remembered and recorded ; his last agonies are beheld with affliction and despair ; and after suffering the ignominious sentence of the law, the body of the culprit, whose death was infamy, and whose life was crime, is attended respectfully and mournfully to the grave, by a train that would not have disgraced the obsequies of a patriot or a hero. The object of such a tragedy can never consider himself as the actor of a mean or ignoble part ; nor can the people view in the hero of their admiration or pity, a murderer and a robber, whom they would have regarded with horror, if their feelings had not been injudiciously enlisted in his favor. Thus the end of the law is defeated, the force of example is totally lost, and the place of execution is converted into a scene of triumph for the sufferer, whose crime is wholly forgotten, while his courage, resignation, or piety, mark him as the martyr, not the guilty victim of the laws."

If it should be asked in what way I would dispose of those criminals who infest society, and who, by their violences, give cause of apprehension for the safety of our peaceful citizens, I would reply—place them in a situation where they will be restrained from committing crimes. Let the premeditated murderer ; the man who imbrues his hands in the blood of another, be doomed to confinement and labor within the walls of a penitentiary. His crime evinces a state of mind that renders him unfit to live in society. He is as much an object of restraint as the inmate of a mad house, who is placed there to prevent him from depriving others of existence. The *deliberate* murderer, whose crime may have been of the highest degree, ought to be condemned to live by himself. Were he permitted to associate with the other prisoners, his mind would be diverted from those reflections, which are so essential to the creation of a proper sense of guilt, and to lead him to make all the reparation in his power, by contrition, and by cultivating habits of industry. The most atrocious have uniformly an aversion to labor ; their pursuits inspire them with a hatred to what they call drudgery. Here necessity would compel them to pursue a different course. Imprisonment and hard work would, moreover, make a more profound and lasting impression on the lawless. The more they are accustomed to an independent and idle mode of existence, and to despise restraint, "the greater," says Bentham, "will be their dread of a state of passive submission and toilsome captivity. This kind of life would be one continued struggle with their inclinations." It would, in fact, combine all that is essential to promote public example, and to restrain the vicious.

So long as the proper education of youth continues to be neglected ; so long as they are surrounded with numerous temptations to commit

evil ; so long as they perceive that money, instead of integrity, is valued the most, and that the possessors of it are more respected than the virtuous who may be in poverty ; so long as hypocrisy is considered preferable to morality, and the unassuming man of talent and industry is held in less estimation than the upstart arrogant pretender ; so long will society be infested with crimes, and those who commit them be proper objects of restraint. But this ought never to be attended by bodily infliction. Coercion makes men callous and revengeful ; while mild treatment and kindness lead them to reflect on their folly, and to make reparation for the wrongs they have committed. It should never be forgotten, that had these unfortunate violators of the law been properly educated, they would have been good citizens. They should not, therefore, be too rigorously dealt with for offences, into the commission of which they had been hurried by causes over which they could have no control.

Capital punishment is a remnant of feudal barbarism, which assumed the revengeful spirit of the family of the deceased, and made the law, which should be general and salutary, a vindicator of private wrongs, the instrument of private persons, and the means of gratifying their passions. We express surprise that Great Britain, with all her boasted improvements and knowledge, should retain so much of this antiquated and sanguinary system ; but how much more ought we, who have gone so far beyond the English in correcting our political institutions, to be astonished, that we have permitted to remain in our criminal code, one of the most barbarous and impolitic laws which disgraced the ancestors of those from whom we are descended ; while that very law is seldom or never acted upon in those European states where the feudal system is in full operation, and where the rulers of the people do not lay claim, as in Great Britain, to any high respect for public rights, or to any peculiar regard for those of humanity.

I can well remember the time when the capital punishment of a single individual was so rare an occurrence among us, that it was alluded to by foreigners as a proof of the mildness of our laws, and of the superiority of our institutions. But, from a late message of governor Clinton, it appears that no less than *ten* persons were sentenced to be hanged in this state during the year 1825, and that nine of them were actually executed. To what is this rapid increase of crime to be attributed ? It cannot be owing to an increase of population, or to any relaxation on the part of our executive ; for the former has borne no proportion to the number of criminals put to death ; and it will not be pretended that those who preside in our courts, for trying offences, are less active, or less acquainted with the laws of their predecessors. To me it appears, that the increasing punishment of death, and the frightful list of capital offences at every session, indicates something wrong in our criminal code, which claims the most vigilant attention of the people and of the legislature. A celebrated author says, " When, in countries that are called civilized, we see age going to the almshouse, and youth to the gallows, something must be wrong in the system of government. It would seem, by the exterior appearance of such countries, that all were happiness ; but there lies hidden from the eye a mass of wretchedness that has scarcely any other chance than to expire in poverty or infamy. Its entrance into life

is marked with the presage of its fate, and until that is remedied it is in vain to punish."

How powerfully does the fact established by governor Clinton's message confirm the train of reasoning I have been pursuing, to show the injustice and the inutility of inflicting the punishment of death. How forcibly does it teach legislators and nations the necessity of reforming their criminal codes, and of substituting for their present sanguinary inflictions some mode of restraining crime more efficient, and more consistent with our natures and with the present enlightened state of the human mind.

Removal.—The office of the *Correspondent* is removed to No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library, where all orders and communications are requested to be forwarded.

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The Theophilanthropist, containing critical, moral, theological, and literary essays, among which are *The Origin of Evil*, by Soame Jenyns, and *The Morality of Mahometanism*, both scarce and valuable works, 8vo.—\$1 bound.

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Critical Examination of the Life of St. Paul, from the French of Boulanger—50 cents.

Christianity Unveiled, from the French of Boulanger—50 cents.

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Heretic.—Of the tendency, of the frame and bent of the clerical mind, the word *heretic* involves evidence which reaches not the head only but the heart. The early church used the Grecian language, and the word *heresy* is Greek. Exactly, correctly, literally, it signifies *choice*. The crime of heresy was the crime of making a *choice*! There was the consummation of the clerical dominion! When it became execrable to make, and he became execrated who did make, a choice; that is, when the clergy might choose what other people were to choose, their power was thenceforward limited only by their will.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

EFFICACY OF FAITH.

Mr. Editor—The mawkish and deceptive declaration of the supreme power of faith, in procuring happiness in another world, is so constantly proclaimed, and has such a demoralizing influence on mankind, that it ought not to pass without censure. The Richmond Whig, in giving an account of the execution of the three Spaniards for piracy and murder of the blackest die, observes, that "It must be gratifying to the public to know that they met their doom with resignation; and with the consoling belief, that through the mercy of the Redeemer, and by their sincere *repentance* and *devotion*, they should obtain forgiveness." Far be it from me to represent the Deity as ferocious and vindictive, or to believe that he could have the heart to torture any human being to all eternity in a brimstone fire. But if such criminals as these three Spaniards are to be let off by *faith* in the Redeemer, *repentance*, and *devotion*, hell and purgatory have been invented in vain; for no man ever existed, who, when detected, and about to be punished for crime, did not sincerely repent; and, if very ignorant, as most criminals are, and had been in due training by priests, put full faith in the efficacy of the Redeemer's atonement. But this a sneaking, dishonorable, and unfair way of getting to heaven. Upon this principle the moral man of sense is excluded, while the greatest criminals are admitted to all the joys of paradise. Give the latter a short stay in purgatory: I ask no more. I consider a belief in purgatory to be the most salutary religious dogma that was ever promulgated; and that it is very unfortunate that protestants abandoned it.

But to proceed with this redeeming cant: Gen. Jackson, when he ordered Harris, the baptist preacher, with five other militia men, to be shot, said, he "hoped he would be pardoned in the other world, through the *intercession* of our *blessed Redeemer*." There can be no doubt that he has been, for the crime charged against him, as he more than atoned for it by the loss of his life. It is to be lamented that public men in this country should think it for their interest to make use of such mean dissimulation. Thomas Jefferson was never guilty of it, and his name is now held in higher veneration than that of any man which America ever produced.

Judge Duer, in pronouncing sentence against Strang, travelled entirely out of the record; and, instead of using the common vulgar phrase of "May God have mercy," &c., he invoked a family of gods, as follows: "May God your Creator, God your Redeemer, and God your Sanctifier

have mercy on your soul." This invocation of three persons *individually*, which constitute but *one godhead*, appears to be intended more to establish the orthodox faith of the pious and learned judge, than to benefit the culprit at the bar.

This unhappy man, Strang, notwithstanding he took every means in his power, by the pamphlet he dictated, and which was published previously to his execution, to render Mrs. Whipple completely miserable in this world, expresses a wish that she may, by repentance, enjoy everlasting peace in heaven; and, relying solely on the atonement and sacrifice of a *bleeding* Saviour, prays that his soul may not be doomed to everlasting torments, which he now most sincerely believes *will and ought to be the fate* of the finally impenitent.

These sentiments indicate the thorough drilling that has been practised upon this miserable man during his confinement. Nothing but the most barefaced priestcraft could induce any reasonable creature to believe that one being, however powerful he may be, has a right to torment another to all eternity, because he is angry with him and has the ability to do it. If there is such an animal in creation as that called the Old Serpent and Satan, and he really bears the character attributed to him by theologians, he might be guilty of such atrocity; but no being that has the least pretensions to moral feeling could be capable of it.

In the case of Johnson, who was executed a few years since, in the city of New York, there was great difference of opinion among the clergy in regard to his spiritual condition. The Rev. Mr. Onderdonk, however, administered to him the sacrament, and, I presume, according to the custom of the Episcopal church in such cases, declared his sins to be *forgiven*. But the Rev. Hooper Cumming, acting, I think, more honestly, told Johnson plainly that there was no hope for him; that he must be damned. However unpleasant this declaration might be to the criminal, its influence on community, which always pays great respect to the opinion of divines in such matters, must certainly be more effectual in deterring from crime, than to declare his sins to be pardoned through faith and repentance.

F.

HISTORY OF SAMUEL.

Continued from page 87.

After the installation of Saul, each returns to his village, and to his fields. Shortly after, the king of the Ammonites takes arms and besieges the city of Jabesh, to the east of Jordan. The Hebrew inhabitants offer to surrender, and to pay tribute. This king would not receive their submission but on condition of putting out all their right eyes, to leave them, he says, to the opprobrium and reproach of Israel. He gives them seven days to decide. These unfortunates send messengers to their brethren of Israel, who are brought to Saul; he is found returning from working with his plough, drawn by two oxen, [a lively picture of the manners of the times;] Saul is seized with anger, [the narrator calls this the spirit of God.] He cuts his two oxen in pieces, and sends them throughout all Israel, with this message, "Whoever does not come immediately and join Saul, his oxen shall be treated in the same manner."

This had the desired effect. All Israel assembled as one man, says the text. The Hebrew version says 30,000 men of Judea, and 300,000 of the eleven tribes. The Greek, on the contrary, says 70,000 of Judea, and 600,000 of the others. Such variations, which are often repeated, show the credit that is due to these books of morals. According to the Greek version, by supposing every six persons to furnish one man of war, there would be three millions of inhabitants on a territory of 900 square leagues; consequently, more than 3000 persons to the square league; which is against all probability. The most reasonable number, perhaps, is 20,000 picked men for a coup de main, which, moreover, demanded rapidity. Saul departs like an arrow; arrives at break of day, and pours on the camp of the Ammonites, who, accustomed to the sluggish manner of the Jews, expected no such movement. Saul surprises, destroys them, and delivers the town. The people, charmed with this beginning, come uncovered, and propose to Samuel to slay those who did not recognize and salute the king. Saul, brave, and for this reason generous, opposes it. This once, Samuel was satisfied, and gives orders that there shall be a general assembly at Gilgal, to renew the installation; which was done.

But why this second ceremony? Was it to give the opponents and malcontents an opportunity to rally with the majority of the people, and to stifle a schism which had more partisans than are indicated; for we see symptoms of it, when, in the approaching war with the Philistines, there were found in their camp many Hebrew deserters, bearing arms against the party of Samuel and Saul. This was the first apparent motive, and it was quite ingenious. But we shall soon discover that Samuel, always profound and full of deception, had another secret, intimately connected with his interests and character. The text tells us, chap. 12, that the assembly being formed, Samuel, standing before all the people, made a speech, the substance of which was, that he had managed their affairs with perfect integrity; that he had taken no one's ox or ass; that he had oppressed or persecuted no one; that he had not taken bribes; and that, nevertheless, he had been forced to put a king in his place. He attributes this step as against God. But why God? It was himself. As, by the nature of the royal regime, such as he has pictured it, Saul could not fail to cause similar vexations. A contrast was created which, even at this time, tends to diminish the credit he had just acquired, and shows the jealousy that actuated Samuel.

This priest insisted, that God had, until then, governed the nation by his special servants, such as Moses, Aaron, Sisara, Gideon, Jephtha, &c.; and that the people, now rebellious, wished to govern themselves by men of their own choice. But as this new system took away the supreme and arbitrary power from the priests, of whom Samuel was the head, we see whence came the deep hatred which he entertained for it; and his sacerdotal arrogance in setting himself up as the chief interpreter and representative on earth of the Divinity. Here the writer (a priest also) has joined a remarkable circumstance: "You see," says Samuel to the people, "that we are in the time of harvest, [the end of June or beginning of July.] Well, I will invoke God, and he will answer me in a voice of thunder and rain, and you shall know your sin of disobedience." So there came thunder and rain, and the people were seized with fear; they knew their

sin, and demanded pardon of Samuel, who (generously) answered, that he would not cease always to pray for them."

This recital is very well; but we have a right to ask for the evidence of its truth? Who has seen the occurrence? Who has told it to us? A narrator at second hand. Was he a witness of it? He is the only one; he is partial. Besides, a crowd of facts and similar accounts are found among the Greeks, the Romans, and all the ancient barbarians. Are we to believe that their seers, that their divines had also the gift of miracles? But, admitting the recital and the fact, we have yet the right to say, that Samuel, more knowing than a multitude of superstitious, ignorant peasants, had perceived the sign or forerunner of a storm, which is not rare at that time of the year. I myself, while travelling, have seen it in the last days of December, when the case is still more singular. The result was, the people placed greater confidence in Samuel; and that was what this ecclesiastical king wanted, in order not to lose the tutelage of his royal lieutenant.

At this time Saul could not have been young; he must have been, at least, 40 years old; for, in the war with the Philistines, which was just ready to break out, his son Jonathan showed himself a warrior already capable of brilliant and hardy deeds. How does it happen, then, that the Hebrew text, and all its versions, tell us that Saul was one year old when he reigned. The interpreters endeavor to correct this by many subtleties; but there is only one good solution to this error. The Hebrew text does not have the word *one*; it says merely, Saul was . . . years old. It is clear that, in the first manuscript, the origin of the others, the number is left blank, because the author (presumed to be Esdras) forgot or could not fix the number; and the proof or mark of this is, that the Greek version, presumed to have been made from this manuscript, has totally suppressed the article.

It was natural for this new king to be elated with his first and brilliant success, and with his sudden and high fortune. We find him also, a little while after this meeting, declare war against the Philistines. Several incidents mentioned, give cause to suspect that this was contrary to the wish of Samuel, and that hence began the misunderstanding which we shall soon see break out. Samuel might, with reason, represent to Saul, "that the Philistines were powerful, warlike, and formidable; that their maritime trade rivalled that of Sidon and Tyre, giving them the means of industry superior to those of the Hebrews; who, although left in peace under their own government, were not in a state fit for independence or resistance, since they had not even the liberty of having smiths to make their axes, their ploughshares, and still more their lances; and that it was, therefore, better to temporize." This is all very true and wise. But Saul went farther; full of confidence in the ardor of the people, he could answer that God would benevolently provide, as in the time of Gideon and Jephtha. He chose 3000 men to remain on duty with him, and sent away the rest. Of this light corps, he gave 1000 to his son Jonathan. This young man soon attacked a post of the Philistines, who called to arms and gathered together. Saul, seeing them numerous, summoned the Hebrews. According to the historian, the Philistines detached 30,000 war chariots, 6000 horsemen, and a multitude of foot soldiers, as

numerous as the sand of the sea shore. We ask who counted these chariots and horsemen? There is, besides, a shocking contradiction, for the whole territory of the Philistines was not more than 100 leagues square, which does not answer to more than 200,000 inhabitants. We must suppose, according to the narrative, there was more than 100,000 warriors. It is a very remarkable circumstance, that in the books of the Jews, the numbers are generally exaggerated beyond belief, and almost always in round numbers by decimals. Fear seized the Hebrews; the country people (like the Druzes) dispersed, and hid themselves in the mountains and caves; Saul found himself in a great straight; he called upon Samuel, who desired him to wait seven days, [he wished to see how it would turn.] During this time, the people contrived to desert. Saul, believing that success depended upon a propitiatory sacrifice, ordered preparations; and seeing the enemy ready to attack him before Samuel's arrival, he determined to make the sacrifice himself, which was the duty of the priest. Finally, Samuel arrived: "What have you done?" says he to Saul. The king explains his reasons. Samuel answers, "You have acted foolishly; you have not observed the orders which God gave you; he had established your kingdom forever: now your kingdom shall not stand; God has chosen a man after his own heart; he has made him chief over his people;" and Samuel went away.

Such a sudden change of conduct could not take place without serious motives. We must suppose that some dissention had arisen between them; some serious dispute of the kind which I have pointed out. If, however, that should not suffice to explain a part so decided, or justify so much insolence, I can perceive another motive. The course of public and private actions of Saul show that he was subject to a nervous disease, the symptoms of which are those of epilepsy. Might it not be, that this distressing disease being ordinarily concealed, Samuel did not know of it when he made choice of Saul; but, having discovered it, he perceived himself to blame in public opinion, and before his enemies, and then sought occasion and means to disown him. It is no less true, that in this his conduct is wicked and blameable, inasmuch as he destroys the confidence of the people in their chief, and encourages them to desert, and lay open the country to the enemy.

This priest thought all success impossible, and, by immolating his vanquished pupil, he wished to insure for himself a compromise with his enemies, both within and without. Chance defeated his calculations. Saul remained with 600 men, courageous and determined, like himself. He takes post before the enemy's camp, prohibiting all attack. Several days passed. His son Jonathan, stealing under cover, (of the night probably,) followed by one only squire, he presents himself before a Philistine post, situated on a high rock; he is taken for a refugee Hebrew, such as had arrived in great numbers for several days before; he climbs up with his squire and is received. In a moment they both attack the enemy with so much boldness and good fortune, that they stretch 20 men dead upon half an acre of ground. Confusion and terror spread through the camp. The Philistines think themselves betrayed, either by one another or by the refugee Hebrews. One man strikes another: Saul, hearing the noise, advances with his men; and the route became complete. Carried away

by his excessive courage, the king imprudently forbids the eating of any thing before the end of the day, and of the slaughter and pursuit. His son, ignorant of this, refreshes himself with a little honey; his father would have immolated him to his oath, (like Jephtha,) but the people oppose it and save Jonathan.

Here is a second victory of the new king; but this happened contrary to all expectation, and must have disconcerted Samuel, who does not appear upon the scene of action. The Philistines, being vanquished, retire to their own country. It would appear that a truce must have been made, since the historian does not speak any more of war on this side. He mentions that Saul turned his arms against other nations, "that he attacked, one after another, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Idumeans, the Syrian kings of Sobah, to the north and beyond Damas; and that it was not until then that he turned again against the Philistines and Amalekites." Every where he was fortunate and conquered. It is evident these different wars must have taken several years; at least, each of them one campaign. The narrator, likewise, seems to terminate here his history, in numbering and naming the wives whom Saul married, the children he had, and the man whom he made commander of his guard and general of his troops.

From the manner in which this chapter is terminated, a reader, used to the style of these books, would believe that the history of Samuel is really finished; for the ordinary form in closing the history of the other kings is, by recounting their wives, their children, and the prominent personages of their reign. The 15th chapter, however, which follows, seems to commence another portion of the reign of Saul, containing the details of the consecration and substitution of David, which may be dated from a scene of the final rupture which took place between the king and Samuel. May it not have been that the last compiler, presumed to have been Esdras, in arranging the manuscripts originally written by Samuel, Nathan, and God, according to the testimony given in Chronicles, i. 29, sewed these narratives together without much care, as was generally done among the ancients? We shall see the proof of this, in the presentation of David to Saul.

To be continued.

The clergy of the "Antidote" have propounded nine or ten very silly queries to the editor of the Correspondent, on the subject of the "Laws of Nature." The first is as follows:

"Why does not this Law of Nature teach the Arabs of the desert to treat with kindness and hospitality the unfortunate seamen who are wrecked on their coast, instead of seizing and making slaves of them, or massacring them, as they sometimes do, without the least mercy?"

Answer.—Because the Arabs, like the Jews and Christians, are the slaves and victims of *priestcraft*!

This answer, like the Christian Almanac, is calculated for the meridian of all other baseless queries.

C. SCHULTZ.

COMPOSITION.

Mr. Editor—I am a constant reader of the *Correspondent*, and am well pleased with the manner in which it is conducted, and generally with the matter of its contents. I am aware that a periodical of the kind requires to be variable, not only in subjects but in the manner of treating them, in order to accommodate the work to the different tastes and intelligence of its readers; and that it is impossible to suit the whole to the particular views of any individual. Besides, an editor, I presume, is sometimes induced to forego his own judgment to indulge a correspondent in a favorite theme, in which he imagines he has discovered something novel, that will be beneficial to disclose; and which, at any rate, if it does not instruct others, will gratify the vanity of the writer to see in print. There has, however, been so much written, and well written, to expose the absurdities of all religious creeds, that an author of the present day, except upon subjects local and temporary, ought to be well assured that he can advance some new arguments, or place old ones in a more pleasing and clear point of view than had been done before, or his labors will be productive of only sheer loss of time, ink, and paper; and, above all, he should observe the rules of Condillac, who says that “In *composition* one should avoid prolixity, because it is fatiguing to the mind; digressions, because they divert the attention; frequent divisions and subdivisions, because they are perplexing; and repetitions, because they are oppressive. What has been once said, and in its proper place, is clearer than if several times repeated elsewhere.”

SCRUTATOR.

Mr. Editor—Your interesting paper is received, and with its contents I am well pleased, as I find it more free from satire and invective than has, unfortunately for the cause of Natural Truth, marked the pages of most modern *theistical* writers. The lectures of the Free Press Association particularly attracted my attention, and were highly gratifying, as I conceive that the manner and style in which they are there treated will be more likely to attract general inquiry, and awaken an honest world from the lethargic mist in which it has been involved. I hope they will continue to embrace a plain, simple, honest, exposition of the scripture text, as it stands when subjected to the analytic power of common sense, or contrasted with those incontrovertible revelations which are invariably opened to the human mind by the all powerful lever of Natural Science. A work conducted upon that plan has long been a favorite idea with me; and, although it has been pursued so far as to embrace an examination of the 1st and 2d chapters of Genesis, as I perceive the subject now in such hands that more justice will be done to it, I freely commit what I have written to the flames, and anticipate much instruction and amusement from a perusal of the lectures expected in future numbers. It is apprehended that the great oversight of Mr. Paine, in theological writing, was that he mingled too much gall with the masterly arguments and unanswerable facts which he offered. Had he adopted a more serious and dignified style, his researches would, in my opinion, have proved a

greater blessing to mankind. These suggestions are thrown out that others, advocating the great and glorious cause of Natural Truth, may reap from their laudable exertions the sweet reward of peace and satisfaction, in the consciousness that they have added permanently to the sum of human happiness, by placing before their fellow men (instead of wild and visionary theories, which at best torture the imagination and distract the mind) the beautiful and eternal laws of Nature and of Nature's God.

Philadelphia, August 29.

A LOVER OF TRUTH.

CLERICAL INTOLERANCE.

"That country where the clergy have the most influence, and use it with the most moderation, is England."

Rev. C. C. Colton.

Mr. Editor—As a comment upon the above written text, I will give you a fact. In the month of February last, a clergyman of the church of England was engaged in reading the funeral service, at the grave of some dead man or woman. As is usual in such cases, a number of persons assembled to witness the ceremony, among whom was a poor catholic, a laboring man, but of good character. It is an item of the mode of worship of the catholics, to cross themselves when the name of Jesus is pronounced, and the poor laborer did so, at each mention of that name by the clergyman. The well fed dignitary, puffed up with pride, and overflowing with rancor against "the accursed papist," ordered him to be seized and dragged into confinement, and even assisted in the worthy task. The *culprit* was confined in a room under ground, with a stone floor, and without fire, during one of the coldest nights of the winter. The next day, he was brought before a magistrate, and his tyrant attempted to set up a charge against him of intoxication, and of disturbing him in the performance of his religious duty; but he was contradicted in every point by his own witnesses, and the man was discharged. Some gentlemen, indignant at this act of tyranny, undertook to bring the oppressor to justice. The magistrate, however, before whom he was summoned, was fearful of the consequences, and strongly recommended a compromise, and that the matter should be hushed up; and there it ended. This was not in any by place, but in the most populous and extensive parish of London; and a statement of the fact was published in the best and most widely circulated paper of England, *The Times*.

AN OBSERVER.

Creed of the Wahabees.—They assert, it is said, the unity of the Deity; they hold him to be immaterial, eternal, and omnipotent; and in their addresses to the Supreme Being, they are fervent and devout. According to them, God has never dictated any written code of laws to men; nor has he made any particular revelation of himself. His existence, they think, is sufficiently manifested in his works. His will cannot be mistaken, since he has implanted the distinct perception of right and wrong in the human mind, together with the conviction that virtue alone can be agreeable to the Author of Nature.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Observance of Sunday. By the Secretary.

A strictly religious observance of the Sabbath, or Sunday, has long been considered by Jews and Christians as one of the most important duties imposed by their religion, and the violation of which as a sin of the most deadly nature—calling down on the nations of the earth the vengeance of a wrathful, implacable deity. Almost every criminal, who forfeits his life to the laws of his country, is made by fanaticism to date the commencement of his career of guilt, from the period when he first began to disregard the religious ceremonies of that day; and this is a theme on which the priesthood never neglect to expatiate, as affording an “awful warning to Sabbath breakers.” Accidents, also, possessing nothing more uncommon than those which occur on every other day of the week—innocent recreation—useful employment—nay, even a discharge of the duties of humanity, are seized with avidity, and magnified into marks and causes of divine displeasure, merely because the individuals who may have suffered, or who may not have been persuaded of the *sanctity* of particular days, were pursuing that course which appeared to them innocent and proper on any day. Of such magnitude, indeed, does superstition regard a strict observance of the Sabbath, that its votaries have openly avowed their determination to oppose the appointment to public office of every person who refuses to subscribe to their puritanical ideas; thus endeavoring, in opposition to our natural rights, to introduce a *religious* test, to fill a *civil* office, every way hostile to the spirit as well as to the letter of our free institutions.

It was to have been expected, that the advocates for this rigid observance of what is denominated the “Christian Sabbath” would have been well assured that the plea they have set up rested on unquestionable grounds; that it is unassailable; and that, as it admits of no exceptions, it has been assented to by the whole community. So far, however, from the injunction to observe one day of the week as more holy than another, being authorized by what is called the divine law, it appears from the Jewish books that no such law existed previous to the period in which Moses is supposed to have lived; that this law merely enjoined a suspension from labor on the seventh day; and that it was never intended for the surrounding nations, but as an observance to distinguish the Jews from their neighbors.

It also appears from the New Testament, that all those marks of distinction, by which the Jews were known as a separate race, were abolished by the introduction of Christianity; and that neither its supposed founder, nor any of his apostles or disciples, gave any instructions to observe another day in its stead. Finally, it is established by ecclesiastical history, that the day now called the *Christian Sabbath* originated with a pagan emperor, who, upwards of 300 years after the supposed birth of

Jesus, issued a decree commanding all his subjects to conform to the religious ceremonies which were observed in the temples, on the first day of the week, in honor of the sun.

Had it ever been intended by the Supreme Being, as alleged by the priests of Christianity, that the pious observance of one particular day was essential to the happiness of man, the rule prescribing this would, undoubtedly, have been universally promulgated. Considering the close intercourse which, according to the Bible, subsisted between God and the patriarchs, he could not have omitted disclosing to them his divine pleasure on this subject. He could not, without being charged with partiality, withhold from such men as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, &c. the knowledge of a fact so essential to that strict conduct by which alone they could obtain the divine favor. Do we, then, find, in the books attributed to Moses, any thing to authorize the opinion, that the patriarchs observed the seventh or any other day as a holy day, or day of rest? No: there is nothing in the Bible, whether we take the Old or the New Testament, to warrant such an inference. It is said of Noah, in particular, that he "was a just man, and perfect in his generation, and walked continually with God;" but we nowhere find that, with all his justice and piety, he ever discharged that (in the eyes of the faithful) important duty of observing the Sabbath. We are told that he was also a preacher of righteousness, that he offered sacrifices, and distinguished between things clean and unclean; but nothing is said of his Sabbatizing. In the history of Noah, days, months, years, and seasons are distinguished, but no Sabbaths; nor is the violation of the Sabbath (regarded in modern times as so great an enormity) mentioned among the vices and crimes of the antediluvians, which are said to have caused the destruction of the world. Even when this globe is represented to have been renewed after the deluge, and the blessing of God repeated as it were in the beginning of things, there is a profound silence respecting the Sabbath. We frequently read in the Bible that Abraham worshipped and called on the name of the Lord; erected several altars, and paid tythes to Melchisedech; that he was circumcised, and offered up not only common sacrifices, but also was about to offer his only son. All these particulars are narrated in the history of Abraham; but it is nowhere said, nor can it be inferred, that this "Father of the Faithful" observed the Sabbath, or esteemed any particular day sacred above the rest. We have also a detailed account of the travels of Abraham and his children; but we find no mention of any intermission of their journey on account of the Sabbath, although, in passing through the desert, it is particularly stated that his descendants suspended their journeyings on the seventh day.

As to Job, who is said to have been so upright and pious that he had not his equal on the earth, it might have been supposed that such a religious person could not be ignorant of a divine precept which had been promulgated to all: or that, knowing of its existence, he would have neglected it. He lived before Moses, and if the institution of the Sabbath had been given by God to mankind from the beginning, it never could have been concealed from him. This history of Job is not narrated in a brief or hasty manner, but fills a whole book, containing the most minute details of his justice, equity, and zeal for what he considered

the pure worship of God. Yet, in the whole account of his life and piety, there is not a single expression which can induce us to believe that he observed the Sabbath. If such an institution had then existed, the writer was in no want of an opportunity of noticing it; for he speaks of the creation of the world, of the foundation of the earth, and the singing of the angels when the work was finished—subjects which would have naturally led him to mention the circumstance of God's resting from his labor, and ordering the observance of the seventh day in commemoration of that occurrence, if such had been the fact. But he makes no mention of the difference of days, or of the sanctification of the Sabbath.

Job is, likewise, said to have offered sacrifices to sanctify or make expiation for his sons, lest they should have said or done any thing irreverently amid their festival entertainments; but he gave no admonition or example about sanctifying a Sabbath; and when, in the 31st chapter, he defends his innocence, and clears himself from many crimes in conversation and in worship, he does not drop a single word as to the observance or violation of the Sabbath, nor does the least shadow of it appear.

It is obvious, from these facts, that the institution of the Sabbath was not universal, or extended to all nations and people; for, had it been given at the beginning, to the supposed first man, it would have continued to be known among all his offspring, and the religion of the Sabbath would have prevailed among all nations. People are usually retentive of festivals and holydays; nor could that easily escape their recollection which was to be repeated every week. If all religion and all sacred rites had perished among the ancients, it would not have been a matter of surprise if the observance of the Sabbath had likewise become extinct. We know that sacrifices, victims, holydays, and other superstitions have been observed and practised in every nation, and in every age; but we have never, in any part of the world, heard of a seventh day to be kept holy, either by divine or human appointment, unless among the Jews.

Even after the supposed period of the universal deluge, we have no monument, no memorial of a Sabbath among the posterity of Noah. The precepts said to have been delivered by Noah himself are still preserved, some of which respect divine worship, and others the conduct of men; but among neither do we find any thing directing the celebration of the Sabbath, or seventh day. Had there been a precept of this nature from the beginning, it could not have been easily lost among the antediluvians, because Adam, who is said to have received it from God to propagate among his posterity, lived long enough to effect this; and there was the same religious obligation, according to the Bible, on Noah to instruct his children in this sacred law. If, by any accident, this law had been neglected, or obliterated by those profane persons who are alleged to have lived before the deluge, Noah would have taken the greater care to have revived it in his family and posterity.

The first mention we have of the word Sabbath is in the 16th chapter of Exodus, where we are told of bread having been rained from heaven to pacify the starving, murmuring Jews. Verse 22d, "And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. Ver. 23, And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord

hath said, *Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath* unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you, to be kept until the morning. Ver. 29, The Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. Ver. 30, So the people *rested* on the seventh day."

From this passage it might be inferred, that the observance of the Sabbath was instituted for the purpose of commemorating the miracle by which the Israelites are pretended to have been supplied with bread from heaven, during their forty years travel in the wilderness. But on turning to the 20th of Exodus, we shall find another reason assigned for instituting that observance: "For in six days (observes the writer) the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Confiding in the accuracy of this passage, and believing that it contains the true reason for observing the Sabbath, both Jews and Christians assure us that it was to commemorate God's resting from his labors of creation, and for no other purpose, the seventh portion of time was set apart to his service. There is another reason, however, given in the Old Testament for this measure. In the 5th chapter of Deuteronomy, verse 15, we are distinctly and emphatically told, that the Sabbath was instituted in remembrance of the Israelites' escape from the Egyptians. The words are, "Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, &c. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm; *therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.*"

Now which of these two last accounts are we to believe? the one that says the Sabbath was instituted to commemorate the *resting of God from his labor*—or the other, which as positively asserts, that it was to *commemorate the deliverance from Egypt*; an event that did not take place until many hundreds of years after the supposed creation of the world? Both the accounts pretend to be inspired, and both to be written by the same person: yet they cannot both be true; for what is contradictory is in direct opposition to truth: neither can they have emanated from a being whose essence is perfection. It is impossible, therefore, to consider either the passage in Exodus or that in Deuteronomy in any other light than as the work of imperfect man—of some deceiver, or cheat, who, in order to subjugate and impose on others, pretended that he had been authorized by God to communicate his sovereign will to mortals. This is the true secret of all the burdensome and useless ceremonies, religious observances, fast days, new moons, and Sabbath days, imposed by the Levites on the ignorant, credulous Jews; and which these ambassadors of heaven have contrived to perpetuate even to this day. But, as roguery always belies itself, we have in this instance, as I have shown in numberless others, the clearest evidence that the Old Testament writers contradict

themselves in all essential particulars. What reliance, then, can be placed in writings claiming to be divine, when we find that the statements in one page overthrow the credibility of those in another? How can we place confidence in testimony which destroys itself, and which would not be received in the most ordinary affairs of life?

To be continued.

Mr. Owen.—Notwithstanding the denunciations in which fanaticism has indulged in reference to this gentleman, we learn, by late arrivals from Liverpool, that he reached that port in safety, and in his usual good health and spirits, in the end of July. The vile contradictory fabrications, which had been circulated by the canting and hypocritical press of this country, had preceded Mr. O. in England, and had there, as here, found individuals sufficiently credulous and active to believe, and promulgate them. To these calumnies, originating in ignorance, and maintained by bigotry, the object of them considered it unnecessary to offer any other refutation than a pointed denial; leaving their truth or falsehood to be decided by the success or failure attending the measures he is now zealously and disinterestedly pursuing to establish *mental* independence, without which it is in vain to calculate on happiness. That Mr. Owen has been induced to depart from some of his original arrangements, he readily admits. Experience, the best of all teachers, has convinced him that he was mistaken in some of his early impressions. But, so far from this having, in the smallest degree, shaken his confidence, it has served to confirm his hopes of ultimate success, and to increase his efforts, if possible, to insure it. As we have reason to expect his return to the United States before winter sets in, we anticipate, on his arrival, such an exposition as to the progress of the new system, in both hemispheres, as will not only silence its most inveterate calumniators, but prove highly gratifying to the real benefactors of the human race. It is not by falsehood or vituperation, that such men as Robert Owen are to be put down in this enlightened age.

The Antidote.—The 15th number of this paper was taken from our office before we could well ascertain its contents. Number 16 has just been received, by which we perceive that the editors have again endeavored, like Acres in the play, to muster their little remaining courage, and to renew the "unceasing warfare;" calculating, no doubt, that victory, as she has done with many a discomfited warrior, may yet hover over their standard. But while the pugnacious conductors of this vehicle of rant, rhapsody, and railing show every disposition to indulge in ireful vociferation, we cannot discover any symptoms in their lengthened columns of a return to reason, or to that candor which is essential to fair argument. After we had shown, from what they call their "sacred books," that the person named David, who is supposed to have reigned over the Jews, was guilty, on his death bed, and that too, with his last breath, of ordering two persons to be slain, to whom he was bound by gratitude, and *by oath*, to keep harmless—after having established, on evidence supplied by the editors of the *Antidote* themselves, that this

"royal butcher" had lived a life of crime, and died with the cry of *murder* on his lips, it was not to be imagined that they would have had the hardihood again to obtrude the example of such a wretch on public notice. Yet, although only a few weeks have elapsed since we transferred from the Bible to our pages a few of the details of the atrocities of this "favorite of heaven," of this "man after God's own heart"—so remarkable for his relentless cruelties—we are now unblushingly assured by these *pious* editors, that "he was *not* cut off in his wickedness. It was the pleasure of God that he should *live*, not only to *repent* of his sins, but to *atone* for them, in some measure, by an *altered life*, by *deeds of goodness*, by *charity* and *beneficence* to his fellow men, and piety towards his offended but merciful Creator!!!"

The individual who could discover "*goodness, charity, and beneficence*," or even compunction for past deeds of enormity, in the bloodthirsty mandates uttered by Israel's king at the very moment of his dissolution, is prepared, if he thinks it his interest to do so, to justify any crime however horrible, and to maintain any proposition however absurd. Of what use is to contend with such an antagonist? A victory in such circumstances is not worth the achieving. We repeat, what we have again and again stated, that if the editors of the *Antidote* will meet us on fair ground—if they will offer any rational evidence, that such a person as Jesus of Nazareth once existed, and that the books composing the Old and New Testaments are *authentic* writings—the productions of the authors whose names they bear—we will then enter with them on the field of argument. But unless they do this—unless they undertake to show that the *foundation* of their system is good; that the *basis* on which they have reared their dogmas is unassailable, they do nothing for their cause. Every proposition they advance is of as much avail in supporting the religion of Zoroaster, of Brahma, of Mahomet, or of the "terrible Odin," as it is in proving the truth of Christianity.

We will not take upon us to dictate to "Philo Veritas" the course he ought to pursue, when he discovers the disingenuous, evasive, and sophistical manner in which his positions have been met by the editors of the *Antidote*. We shall send him the paper in which the article appears professing to be a refutation of his statements, in the perfect conviction that, in whatever way he takes up the subject, he will show more regard for truth, and a greater respect for decency, than has been shown by his fanatical, petulant, and arrogant opponents.

New Harmony Gazette.—Complete sets of Vol. I. of the *New Harmony Gazette* are now received at the office of the *Correspondent*; also Vol. II., as far as published, with the exception of one or two numbers that have miscarried, but which will be supplied. Subscriptions continue to be received for the work, (commencing with either volume,) at \$2 per annum, payable in advance.

Liberal Publications.—We are glad to find, that a gentleman, recently arrived in the United States, has brought with him a considerable number of the philosophical works published in London by Richard Carlile,

which he intends selling at a fair price. As he now resides at some distance from the city, we shall endeavor to open a correspondence with him, for the purpose of obtaining copies of these invaluable publications. Although we are not apprized of the names of the books in his possession, we can be at no loss in forming an opinion of their tendency, when we find them denounced, in the language of cant and fanaticism, "the dregs of an English infidel bookstore that had scarcely escaped burning at the hands of the hangman."

MISCELLANEOUS.

The liberality of the sentiments in the *Talisman* has been much and deservedly admired. The author has missed no opportunity of confronting the vulgar prejudices against Turks and infidels, and has ascribed to the sultan Saladin "every virtue under heaven," constantly giving him the advantage over the redoubted Richard, who seems little better than a clown and bully to him. One would think this *romantic justice* must greatly astound and scandalize Scotch presbyters and Kirk sessions, with whom the author was already no favorite. Has he then forgot his cunning? Or, while he is encountering obloquy in one quarter, is he not *carrying* favor in another, and that the highest? What if this, which seems such a stretch of generosity and "lovely liberalism," should turn out to be the last *ruse* of desperate servility? In a word, is not all this sudden flush of hoary enthusiasm, in favor of Turks and Saracens, trumped up for the occasion, as a diversion to the *uncourtly* popularity of the Greek cause, and intended to persuade us that these ferocious barbarians have a legitimate title to cut the throats of whom they please, from the superior gracefulness of their persons and amiableness of their manners? Such a suspicion appears strengthened by the rage and contumely with which Suliotes, Mainotes, and Greeks are mentioned in the *Anti-quary*. "The base football player!"

Modern Prophets.—Comenius said that the Reign of a Thousand Years was to begin in the year 1672, or in the year 1673. So that there is scarcely any body but believes he died very seasonably, since he avoided the confusion of seeing the vanity of his prophecies. I am persuaded that he did not gain much by it. He was so used to such disappointments, and minded so little what people would say of it, that he could have borne this last check without any trouble. This class of gentlemen are of an admirable constitution; nothing puts them out of countenance; they appear as boldly in company after the expiration of the time as before; they fear neither railleries nor the most serious complaints; they are always ready to begin again; in a word, they are proof against the justest mortifications. We must not altogether lay the fault on the particular turn of their wit, and of their inclination; the public is more to be blamed for it than they are, because of its prodigious indulgence.—*Bayle*.

Debasing Effects of Superstition.—"We kiss the old shoes and dirty handkerchiefs of the saints," says Erasmus, "and neglect their books, the more valuable relics; we lock up their shirts and clothes in cabinets adorned with jewels, but as to their writings, on which they spent so much pains, and which are still extant for our benefit, we abandon them to mouldiness and vermin. It is not difficult to discover the causes of this conduct. As soon as the manners of princes degenerated into brutish tyranny, and the bishops were intent on acquiring profane dominion instead of teaching the people their duty, the whole pastoral care fell to the share of those who are called friars, or *brethren*, or *religious* men—as if brotherly love, charity, and true religion belonged only to them! Then polite literature began to be disregarded. Greek was neglected, Hebrew still more, eloquence was thrown aside, Latin, by a new accession of barbarians, was so corrupted that it could scarcely be called a language; history and antiquities were disregarded; learning consisted in certain sophistical quibbles and subtilties, and all science was to be drawn from the collectors of the common places of philosophy and divinity. These compilers were always dogmatical in proportion to their ignorance; they were glad to have ancient authors disregarded, or gave a helping hand to destroy those books they were not capable of understanding."—*Jortin's Life of Erasmus*. Such was the state in which Petrarch and Boccaccio found the learning of their country.

Removal.—The office of the *Correspondent* is removed to No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library, where all orders and communications are requested to be forwarded.

Printing in all its branches, also *Bookbinding*, neatly and expeditiously executed on the most reasonable terms.

The following publications may be had as above:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

Paine's Theological Works, 8vo.—\$1 12 1-2 in boards, or \$1 50 handsomely bound and gilt. This is the completest and cheapest edition of the theological works of this great man ever published. A few copies only are remaining.

The Theophilanthropist, containing critical, moral, theological, and literary essays, among which are *The Origin of Evil*, by Soame Jenyns, and *The Morality of Mahometanism*, both scarce and valuable works, 8vo.—\$1 bound.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath Day—25 cents.

. Orders for books, in every department of literature, punctually attended to.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PRÆVALEBIT.

No. 8.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 15, 1827.

VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ANTIQUITY OF THE JEWS.

Sir—A writer under the signature of W., Brooklyn, July 20, 1827, in the *Christian and Literary Register*, of August 15, 1827, page 8, is pleased to give us a refutation of the assertion of Philo-Veritas, that there is no evidence of the Jews having existed as a nation till we hear of their subjugation by the Romans; and that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch. W. doubts whether so much flippancy and arrogance as Philo-Veritas displays is worthy of a refutation. A page of confutation is worth a volume of abuse. I shall content myself, therefore, with conceding, that those epithets are very justly applied to me, if I do not prove beyond the shadow of a doubt, that Mr. W. has undoubtedly the best title to them. He has won them and he shall wear them.

W. cites and adopts the axiom of Huet, bishop of Avranches, (p. 18 of the Amsterdam edition of his *Demonstratis Evangelica*, 1780,) *that every book is genuine that was so esteemed by those who lived at the period in which it was written: an axiom that cannot be disputed by those who give any credit to historical evidence.* This is his first axiom in the translation of W.

His second axiom is, *Every history is true which relates events in the same manner as they are related by many cotemporary writers, or by writers who lived near to the time.*

Thus we know Cæsar's Commentaries are genuine, because they are so acknowledged by Cicero and Hirtius; by Strabo, Suetonius, Plutarch, and the ancient grammarians and historians who came after. So we know that the account given of Lewis XI. by Philip de Commines is true, for the facts were also told by his domestic, Matthew Attrebas, to John Sleidan, and he to others, until they have reached our own day. Nothing can be fairer than these rules of controversy: I accept them; and desire they may be applied on the present occasion.

The question then is, whether W., in corroboration of the Mosaic writings and accounts, has produced, as he professes and undertakes to do, the evidence of cotemporary writers, or of writers near to the time of Moses. Moses is supposed to have lived and written about 1500 years before the Christian era. As I do not know, from any credible evidence, that any such man ever existed, I take as authority the common and popular chronologies.

W., in pages 9, 10, 11, and 12, cites against Philo-Veritas, as conclusive, the following authorities, viz.:

Eusebius, who lived in the fourth century after Christ, and who died A. D. 340.

Tertullian, who died about 220 of our era.

Strabo, the geographer, cotemporary with Christ.

Justin, the abridger of *Trogus Pompeius*, A. D. 143.

Pliny, the elder, who died A. D. 79.

Tacitus, the historian, A. D. 99.

Juvenal, the poet, A. D. 128.

Longinus, the critic, A. D. 273.

Numenius, (I suppose the Pythagorean, of Apamea, whose works are not extant,) and who lived, I believe, about A. D. 200. He mentions Christ.

Chalcidius, of whom I can give no account, nor W. neither, for he cites, on this occasion, *Berdeus*, who wrote 1520.

Diodorus Siculus, cotemporary with Christ. Why need W. cite so common an author as *Diodorus*, from the *Bibliotheca* of *Photius*, who flourished A. D. 886?

Justin Martyr, A. D. 163. *This faithful specimen of the whole race of fathers of the church, says (as W. quotes him) that most historians, poets, lawgivers, and philosophers of the Greeks mention *Moses*. He might as well have said that *Baron Munchausen* mentions him too. But let us see. *Polemon*, *Appion* of *Posidon*, *Ptolemy*, *Mendesius*, *Hellanicus*, *Philocorus*, *Castor*, *Thallus*, and *Alexander Polyhistor*. These are the poets, and lawgivers, alluded to by *Justin Martyr*! Not a sentence of the writings of these authors did W. ever behold, except perhaps *Alexander Polyhistor*, and I doubt even him. As to *Ptolemy*, if W. had known what he was writing about, he would have let us know which of the *Ptolemies* he alluded to. Where are these writers extant? I should be glad to know. Or were they so obscure that nothing is deemed worth preserving that they wrote? What evidence can the second hand, doubtful testimony of men whom nobody knows amount to? Who can show that any of these obscure names belonged to a poet, historian, philosopher, or lawgiver? Thus it is for a man to rest on second hand authorities, like W., who, however, knew no better. But, adds *Justin Martyr*, (I quote W.) what is well worth attention, "they received this account of *Moses* not from the Jews but from the Egyptian priests." Does *Justin Martyr* give any citations out of the works of these writers to prove this? None. Moreover, I say, without fear of contradiction by any man of competent learning, that there is not a book, or a fragment of a book, now extant, or that ever existed, so far as we know, written by an Egyptian author in the Egyptian language. Neither *Young*, nor *Champollion*, or *Salt*, or *Le Fron*, pretend that there is any such thing. Again, while these Egyptian impostors were persuading *Herodotus* to swallow their fables of an uninterrupted succession of priests for near 12,000 years, why did they not mention *Moses*? But why did not Mr. W. give us at once, instead of his own crude, meagre, and unlearned account, the learned but fallacious chapter of *Huetius*, (ch. 2, p. 73,) wherein *Probatum aliorum Scriptorum testimoniis veterum librorum Mosis*? or, what was better still, an extract from *Josephus contra App.*? and we might then have had something to reply to, instead of the borrowed boldness

of W.'s defence. But if he thinks himself equal to the task of defending the ground he has assumed, let him show some signs of real research by a reference to original authors which he has himself read; for it is manifest to any man of learning, that he has made up his reply to me from second hand quotations of modern writers. The whole question of the existence of the Jews as a nation, is discussed in the profound and laborious style of research which distinguishes the first names among the German theologians, by Daniel Wyttenbach, in his *Opuscula*, vol. 2, p. 416, in the dissertation de Unitate Dei. Amsterdam, 1821. He there shows, that there is not an historic notice of the Jewish nation prior to the foundation of Alexandria. Nor is there, in fact, any notice of any of the books of the Jews, till the Septuagint translation, as it is called, was made at Alexandria.

Hence then it appears, that this notable critic and theologian, after pretending to cite with approbation the axiom of Huetius, offers, as authorities corroborative of Moses, writers who wrote from 1500 to 1800 years after Moses!!! And this man pretends to be a defender of Christianity and the Christian scriptures! *Non defensoribus istis tempus egit.* He puts me in mind of the Spanish proverb, "Heaven defend me from my friends; I will defend myself from my enemies."

PHILO-VERITAS.

P. S. Justin Martyr brought to my recollection his first author, Eusebius, who commences the 32d chapter of the 12th book of his *Preparatio Evangelica* thus: οτι δεησι πωρς τω Ψευδς αντς φαρμακς κησδαι επι οφελεια των δεομενων τε τοις τε γροτς. "How it may be lawful and fitting to use falsehood as a medicine; and for the benefit of those who require to be deceived." He justifies this by a reference not only to Plato, but by the example of the sacred writers of the Old Testament! He is not the only one of the fathers who lays down broadly the same doctrine, so convenient for the professors of pious frauds.

CHRONICLES COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING BOOKS OF JEWISH HISTORY.

Sir—The first nine chapters of the book of Chronicles contain what may be considered a concise chronology of eminent names, both of individuals and families; occasionally interspersed with a few historical facts, in relation to the state and condition of the Jews at different periods. At the commencement of the tenth chapter, a more particular history is commenced and carried forward, beginning at the defeat and death of Saul by the Philistines.

For the benefit, therefore, of those who may not have made a critical examination and comparison of the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, I shall note those variances between these books that appeared to deserve consideration. The tenth chapter of Chronicles agrees verbatim with the last chapter of the first book of Samuel, except in the two last verses in Chronicles, which say "So Saul died for his transgressions, which he committed against the Lord," &c. But the next chapter in Samuel, which is the first chapter in the second book, is not to be found in Chronicles: and yet, as matter of history, it is by no means

unimportant, containing, as it does, the particulars of the last moments of the unfortunate Saul, as related to David, by a young man who had put the finishing stroke to his fate by Saul's own request.

Passing this chapter, the next in the second of Samuel, and the eleventh in Chronicles, are meant to record the same events ; but, the two accounts vary in very important points, Chronicles recording the fact, (if indeed there is any fact to be relied upon in the whole history,) that all Israel gathered themselves together and crowned David at Hebron, while the second chapter of the 2d of Samuel states, as explicitly, that the men of Judah alone came and made David king, only over the house of Judah ; and stating in the three succeeding chapters the hostility between the house of Saul and David, it goes fully into the circumstances, which finally, after a war of seven years and six months, resulted in David's becoming king over all Israel. But, in Chronicles we have no account of this hostility or of this result.

When we come to the fifth chapter of 2d Samuel, we find the same facts related, and in exactly the same words with the eleventh of Chronicles, in relation to the crowning of David at Hebron. From here the two respective chapters continue verbatim for six or eight verses ; after which, the Chronicles give a minute description of the mighty men and captains, together with the number of all David's forces ; from what tribes taken, &c. These matters, with a history of battles, occupy four chapters. But what is certainly very remarkable, these four chapters, ending with the fourteenth of Chronicles, contain, in the nine last verses, precisely the same account, in exactly the same words, with the nine last verses of the fifth chapter of 2d Samuel. The two histories now, as respects date alone, are respectively brought up alike in the last of the fifth chapter of 2d Samuel, and in the last of the fourteenth of 1st Chronicles. The last half of the sixth chapter of 2d Samuel, and the whole of the fifteenth of 1st Chronicles, now record the same events, and in some parts are made to do so in the same words ; which is a curious fact. But, in general, the relation in Chronicles is the most circumstantial. Although in these chapters, as in many others that have gone before them, there is the most unquestionable evidence, that one was copied from the other, yet, we find the order of the events strangely mixed and transposed, especially in the first of sixth Samuel. There we are told that the ark of the covenant was brought up in a new cart by David ; and that Uzzah was slain by God, because Uzzah out of a good intent took hold of the ark to prevent its falling ; for this, "God smote him that he died." This event seems to be related as of prior date in Chronicles. There is, however, another circumstance worthy of notice in the two histories of bringing up the ark of the covenant, as it is called. Chronicles, chapter 16th, says that David "said or sung" a psalm on this memorable occasion ; none of the shortest neither ; but this psalm is not to be found in Samuel's relation of the same circumstance. Passing by the chapter containing this psalm, we find both the seventh chapter of 2d Samuel, and the seventeenth chapter of Chronicles, recording the same dialogue between king David and Nathan the prophet, on the subject of *building God a house to dwell in* ; which, as the story goes, made such a strong impression on the prophet's mind, that it seems to have followed him even in his dreams. Leaving

this vision, or, if you will, not discussing the point, whether there is a difference in the origin of dreams sacred and dreams common; and still leaving that great question untouched, whether God needed a house to dwell in or not, it will be sufficient for us to notice, in these two chapters, the evidence they furnish of their having been taken, verbatim, one from the other; or at most with only that difference that different translators would be likely to make.

Chapter 8th of 2d Samuel, and chapter 18th of Chronicles, record the same events, and in exactly the same order; but here, as well as in many other places of these different records, numbers and dates seem to hold no kind of correspondence—thousands being frequently changed to hundreds; besides a change in the name of principal captains, and valiant men. It has been seen that the 8th of 2d Samuel, and 18th of Chronicles, were alike. But the 9th chapter of Samuel, and, which records David's solicitude to find a remnant of the house of Saul on whom he might exhibit his gracious regards; and his having found one in the person of Mephibosheth, a lame son of Jonathan, grandson of Saul; relates also that he made him partake at his table, and that he restored to him the lands of his grandfather Saul. Of all this is to be found in Chronicles. Proceeding on to the 10th of 2d Samuel, and the 19th of 1st Chronicles, we find events recorded exactly in the same order, and almost always in the same language. Here, also, will be found the substitution of hundreds for thousands, and of horsemen for footmen. Whatever means may be resorted to, in accounting for the difference in these two histories, the impression must be fixed on the mind, that one was originally copied from the other. The copyist either found the original manuscript defaced, and supplied the deficiencies from his own fancy, or from tradition; or, finding what did not suit his purpose, he changed it for what did. Or, perhaps, he took very general history, and made from it a history more extensively filled with incident of his own or traditional growth. One thing seems certain, that the copyist, compiler, or abridger, whoever he was, thought less of the necessity of fidelity in the Jewish history, than many among us who refer every thing in life to something in these writings of a corresponding nature. But, the historian of "God's own particular people," can claim no indulgence of this kind at our hands. Truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, should have been his motto. He should, at least, have exercised his office, even if God had had nothing to do in the matter, under that rigid regard to truth which modern historians and modern critics make indispensable.

Thus far, sir, I have perused, compared, and noted a small portion of that book which, if taken only as a specimen of the rude condition of people for whom it unfolded an equally rude system of theology, is well deserving to be read; but which, when attempted to be palmed on mankind as unfolding the excellence and wisdom of God, deserves only our contempt. When I shall resume this labor, will depend on leisure; which, at this busy season of the husbandman, is not a thing of promise.

LOOKER-ON.

Athens, August 6, 1827.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH. BY C. SCHULTZ.

Continued from page 89.

123. It is a fact, that every priest will show some respect or friendship for any rich hypocrite of some standing, who conceals his doubts and pays a dollar a year to such a priest.

124. It is a fact, that there is no priest who is not a friend to a union of church and state, if his own sect could be the favorite one.

125. It is a fact, that every priest is a friend to *penal* laws; otherwise your constitutions would not be violated by *penal* laws in favor of religion or Sunday.

126. It is a fact, that there is a union of church and state already in this country—as witness the laws relative to marriage in the south; and your ridiculous laws and proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings in the north; witness, also, the daily and childish mummerly of prayers, in your legislative halls.

127. It is a fact, and the most shocking of all, that every press in Europe, Asia and America is in the vilest state of bondage to the priesthood thus imagined. And in all this degradation, the American presses are sunk the lowest. Because, all the others are kept down by a military force; but the American editors have no such excuse, for they have *voluntarily* submitted to become the panders and panegyrists of your persecuting priesthoods! Not one has escaped from such a damnable contagion! Verily, I say unto you, that our negroes in Virginia enjoy more mental liberty than they. Who would not “rather be a dog and bay the moon, than such” an editor?

128. It is a fact, that if *one* more priest had had an intrigue with some pretty nun or proselyte, while the council of Nice was sitting, then the “Song of Solomon” would not have been the “Word of God;” but what it really is, the words of a sensualist!

129. It is a fact, that Martin Luther did not believe that the Revelations of St. John, or the Epistle of St. James, were “inspired” writings.

130. It is a fact, that *pious forgeries* have, in all ages, been one of the political engines of every church. And the forged accounts of Christ in Josephus, are melancholy proofs of the depravity of the Christian priests.

131. It is a fact, that Eusebius, one of the most credulous fathers of the church, is suspected of making that forgery in Josephus.

132. It is a fact, that there is equal cause for suspicion, that the similar brief accounts given of Christ, by Tacitus and Suetanas, are also pious forgeries, and, perhaps, by the same hand.

133. It is a fact, that if the existence of the Jews is a miracle, then the Hindoos are a greater.

134. It is a fact, that nothing but worldly self interest is the miracle which sustains the Jews. For, it is well known, that ever since the destruction of Jerusalem they have been fools enough to believe that the time of their restoration is nigh, and that each male child born to them may prove to be their prince or restorer to the land of their ancestors; when they are to be rewarded a thousand fold for all their faith and sufferings.

135. It is a fact, that all prophecies were written after the events had taken place, or the time interpolated in their writings; or written in the true Pythian style; that is, to suit any time.

136. It is a fact, that it is altogether impossible for man ever to arrive at the *truth* in religion, so long as they attend to interested teachers alone.

137. It is a fact, which must stare every priest in the face, that if the Bible is from God, all the powers of heaven, earth, and hell, cannot injure it; and every attempt or discussion against it must redound to the honor of God, and the triumph of his priests.

138. But, it is also a fact, that every priest is an enemy to every free and impartial discussion, and tremble at every attempt to inquire into their fat and lazy livings; thus proving, by their own conduct, that they are hypocrites, and dare not be tried by God, or a free press.

139. It is a fact, that all the ancients believed that the earth was flat, and its surface an extended plain; and the Bible fully proves, that this was the notion entertained by all the writers of the Bible; for it is continually referring to the "pillars" and "foundations" of the earth!

140. It is a fact, at least one of your "inspired" facts, that the devil took Christ upon a mountain, from whence he could see "all the kingdoms of the earth!" thus demonstrating, that this "Son of God" was quite as ignorant as his devil! for it is evident that both the teacher and scholar believed that the earth was flat, and that they could view the whole from a mountain!

141. It is a fact, that your God could find a *fiery chariot* to convey a humble imposter to heaven, but had none to bring his Son *from* the same place!

142. It is a fact, that the religion of Rome was introduced by the priestly seduction of the virgin Rhea Silva, who was honored with a "Son of God!"

143. It is a fact, that Miss Creusa, another virgin, through the kind paternity of the priests, brought forth another "Son of God," who was the founder of the religion of Greece!

144. It is a fact, that the Chinese virgin, mother of Fo-Hi, produced another "Son of God," for the same purpose!

145. It is a fact, that the Hindoo nymph Rohini was likewise honored with another priestly "Son of God!"

146. It is a fact, that a dozen more instances might be cited, of various other virgins producing their "Sons of God!"

It must, therefore, be self-evident to every impartial investigator of facts, that if God really intended to send a son on earth, it is impossible that he should be driven to the necessity of imitating the very suspicious mode adopted by the heathen gods, and their prostituted virgins and priests!

147. It is a fact, that the first accounts of Christianity are buried in deep and dark suspicions. For it cannot be proved that either Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John actually wrote the books which bear their names; or that they even were written within the first half century.

To be continued.

Mr. Editor—It gives me real satisfaction to send for another copy of the *Correspondent*; and this I do with the greater pleasure, that the work is highly appreciated by your subscribers in this city: nor can the labors of Philo-Veritas, Shultz, and, above all, your own, fail to excite a high interest. Indeed, your journal needs only to be read by an independent mind to be approved of; and many, who are not subscribers to it now, will undoubtedly regret, when too late, that they have not subscribed, and that, too, for the early numbers.

In the first volume, I wrote several articles, or rather rhapsodies. But if I possess one spark of genius, it is paralyzed by the labors of your able correspondents; and nothing but an ardent zeal can again stimulate my puny efforts. You know, Mr. Editor, that I have no interest in your publication but in common with your subscribers. Indeed, it has been rather a loss in a pecuniary way. I make this remark lest it should be thought that I praise the *Correspondent* from interested motives.

As this is a miscellaneous article, permit me to ask the question, which you will have the goodness to answer in your next number, If there is an *impartial* biography of Thomas Paine in existence? Such a work is much wanted, and I believe would have a good circulation.

Would it not add to the value of Mr. Shultz's "Facts" if reference was made to the authorities on which he grounds his "facts?" I hope he will excuse me when I tell him, that, for myself, I am satisfied; but feel confident, that many who have not yet broken the shackles of priestcraft, and who need only to see clearly to be convinced, might turn from "darkness to light," and from the power of superstition unto that of common sense.

Philadelphia, September, 1827.

JULIAN.

THE JEW AND THE CATHOLIC.

Mr. Editor—On the occasion of a public funeral, some time since, in the city of New York, all the clergymen of the city were invited to attend. There happened to be but one Jew and one catholic priest present, viz.: Mr. S. and father O'Brian, the younger; and, as the devil would have it, these two were classed together in the procession; the two extremes of all religious sects in this country; as far removed from each other as the north and south poles. This arrangement caused the displeasure of father O'B., and he expressed his disapprobation in very severe terms afterwards, saying, that if it were to take place again, he certainly would leave the procession. This came to the knowledge of Mr. S., and on another occasion, which occurred soon after, on the death of lieut. gov. Broome, he took a seat, previous to the procession, next to Mr. O'B., and stated to him what he had heard respecting the affair, which Mr. O'B. acknowledged, adding that he felt very indignant at the transaction, considering it a personal insult. Why, said Mr. S., do you know any thing against my moral character? No, answered Mr. O'B., but your ancestors killed my God, and I will never forgive one of the race. Mr. S. coolly replied, that he might do the same to his God, if he could; he should never be angry with him for it.

There is a great deal of point and meaning in this reply of Mr. S., to those who are capable of perceiving it. The very supposition that God, the Creator of the world, could be put to death by mortals, must strike those who think at all for themselves with horror; and nothing but the renunciation of reason and common sense could have enabled priestcraft to palm this absurd and monstrous fable on any portion of the human family.

A. B.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Observance of Sunday. By the Secretary.

Continued from page 109.

An intelligent Frenchman has placed the idea of God resting or reposing after his labor in a most ludicrous point of view. Admitting, he says, that the Almighty really found himself so much exhausted by the six days' creation, as to require rest on the seventh, "What did he do on the eighth and the following day. Did he work, or did he rest? Do you answer, that he continued to repose, and still reposes? According to that account, in order perfectly to resemble that God of constancy or consistency, it would be necessary that man, after having labored six days, should consecrate the remainder of his life to repose. Do you assert, that God still works? At what, then, does he work? At preserving what he has created? Take care that a shocking inconsistency does not escape your mouth; for, according to your own assertions, there would have been one day, at least, in which God neither created nor preserved; and, notwithstanding, on that day the world must have existed without him. It would then be possible that it should always have existed in the same manner."

If it can be shown, as I am confident it can, that Christianity has no other foundation for its doctrine of a Sabbath, than the questionable authority derived from the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy, on what pretence is it that its priests arrogate to themselves the right of denouncing those who cannot admit the defective evidence which these books present? Even if some portion of mankind were willing to take the Jews as an example in this instance, is it to be endured that our citizens are to be deprived of their rights, because they refuse to give implicit credit to every thing contained in what are called the sacred books of that people? It requires but a very slight examination to be satisfied that these writings have been palmed on the Jews as authentic, by those who fabricated them, or were accessory to the deception. There are many intelligent individuals belonging to that nation who are now aware of this, and not ashamed to acknowledge the fact, although their peculiar situation might be expected to render them extremely reserved on such topics. But, for those professing a religion so opposite, and who are not always careful to conceal the hatred they entertain for the persecuted descendants of Israel—for such men to cling to the very objectionable books belonging to that hated and proscribed people, as the only authority they

have for observing a Sabbath, no other apology can be found than in that bigotry, the offspring of ignorance, which it is the constant study of the priesthood to instil into the human mind.

But, supposing the authority in question was unobjectionable on the ground of policy or expediency, it is evident from the whole tenor of the Old Testament, that the observances required of the Jews on the seventh day had no relation to any thing *spiritual*. The requisition to "remember the Sabbath" respected a suspension from bodily labor only, in which the cattle employed in husbandry or other purposes were included. The word Sabbath, or, as the Jews pronounce it, *Sabbat*, literally means *rest*; that is, a cessation from labor. The worship of God, whatever may be said to the contrary, was not the real object of its institution. Some writers have traced its origin to the Egyptian legislators, who, pitying the condition of the poor Jews, who were compelled to work without intermission, wished, by means of the institution, to insure to them a day of relaxation, of which their masters could not deprive them. It was this circumstance that suggested to the Jewish legislator, after their departure from Egypt, the appointment of a similar day of rest, which, as I have already shown, was, before that time, unknown to them or their predecessors.

It was on account of this peculiarity that the Jews were distinguished among other nations by the name of *Sabbatarians*—a name used by the Greek and Roman historians and poets, sometimes as a reproach, and sometimes to point the Hebrews out from all other people. They were considered as a distinct race on account of the observance of the Sabbath, in which no other nation resembled them. The Egyptians and Idumeans, like the Israelites, practised circumcision, but the latter only kept the Sabbath, or abstained from work on that day. On the supposition, then, that the Old Testament is admissible as authority for observing one day out of seven, it is perfectly obvious that it in no way sanctions the dogmas of those who declaim against every one that does not adopt their gloomy and puritanical notions respecting that day. We have all, doubtless, heard of the law of Connecticut which says, that "No person shall *run*, on a Sabbath day, nor *walk* in his garden, nor *elsewhere*, but reverently to and from meeting." The fanatics who framed this law forgot, when they published it, what their own sacred books tell them—that God dwells not in temples made with hands, and that the earth is full of his glory. "One of the finest scenes, (observes an intelligent writer,) and subjects of religious contemplation, is to walk into the woods and fields, and survey the works of Nature. The wide expanse of heaven—the earth covered with verdure—the lofty forest—the waving corn—the magnificent roll of mighty rivers—and the murmuring of the pebbled brooks—are scenes that inspire the mind with delight. But this the gloomy Sabbatarian must not contemplate. Entombed within the walls of his dwelling, he shuts from his view the temple of Nature. The sun shines no joy to him. The gladdening voice of nature calls on him in vain. He is deaf, dumb, and blind, to every thing around him. Whence could come this miserable notion of devotion? It comes from the gloominess of the Christian's creed, who sees a God only in terror, sits brooding over scenes of hell and damnation, and can have no joy in beholding the glorious

scenes of Nature. Nothing in that wonderful and stupendous volume accords with his principles. He can perceive nothing there that tells him that an Almighty power created millions on purpose to be damned, and that children of a span long are born to burn for ever in hell. Every thing, on the contrary, reproaches him with his unjust ideas, and disowns the hardness and ingratitude of his principles. He, therefore, shuns the sight of them on a Sabbath day."

But taking up the matter as viewed with the jaundiced eyes of superstition, I would ask the Sabbatizing Christian why he does not observe the day originally appointed as a Sabbath, but another day for which he can produce no authority whatever in any part of the Bible? It was the *seventh day* which the Jews were commanded to observe, throughout all generations, as a Sabbath, and those who performed any servile work on that day were subject to the penalty of death. How is it then that Christians can excuse themselves, not only for neglecting the day altogether, but for performing all kinds of labor on that day, and compelling those in their employment to follow their example? They will, probably, answer, that the Jewish dispensation has been superseded by the Christian, and that the founder of the latter religion showed by his example, that he intended the seventh day Sabbath should be abolished. Although I have doubts as to the correctness of this reasoning, even supposing the New Testament books to be authentic, I would still ask, by what authority it is, after Jesus abrogated the Jewish Sabbath, that his followers now observe a different day of the week, which they call the *Christian Sabbath*? It is nowhere said that the founder of Christianity gave any instructions as to such a day. It is not stated in any of the gospels or epistles, that a day was set apart by the first Christians to be observed as their Sabbath; nor does any thing appear from ecclesiastical history to warrant the belief that, during the three first centuries of our present era, it was the practice among Christians to assemble together on any particular day for religious worship.

The fact is, and those who are most interested in concealing the truth know it, that there is no authority existing which has even the semblance of being divine, for what is now called the Christian Sabbath. It was the monster Constantine, instigated, doubtless, by the priests, who established the observance of the day on which we are now met together; not in imitation of the Jewish Sabbath, but to celebrate the pagan mysteries, established in honor of the Sun. The decree by which this was effected is as follows: "Let all the judges and town people, and the occupations of all trades, rest on the venerable day of the Sun. But let those who are situated in the country freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture, because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines, lest, the critical moment let slip, men should lose the commodities granted them by the providence of heaven."

Thus it is that Christians, who owe the fundamental doctrines of their religion to a bloodthirsty, unprincipled emperor, are also indebted to the same sovereign for the mandate, which compelled them to assemble on the first day of the week for religious worship in the temple dedicated to the worship of the Sun. Such is the authority, and the only authority that can be offered for the strict pharisaical observance of a day,

which is inconsiderately called the "Lord's day." And for not regarding it as of greater importance than any other day, the priests of Christianity would ruin here, and doom to everlasting punishment hereafter, millions of intelligent human beings. I admit there are some Christian professors who entertain more rational opinions on this subject. Indeed, from the time of Constantine, the temper and spirit with which the Sabbath has been solemnized, at different times has been as various as the changes in our climate, and frequently attended with as baneful consequences—fluctuating from the sternest self mortification, and the most inexorable rigor, to the opposite extreme of improvident and licentious hilarity. "The old puritan who refused to *brew on a Saturday*, lest his beer should work on a Sunday, was scarcely more ridiculous than the sceptical Le Sage of Geneva, who, being anxious to ascertain whether the Author of Nature still prescribed to himself the observance of the original day of rest, measured, with the nicest exactitude, the daily increase of a plant, to ascertain whether it would cease growing on the Sabbath; and finding that it did not, of course decided for the negative."

By a statute of king Charles I. of England, it was ordered that "no persons should assemble, on the Lord's day, out of their parishes, for any sport whatsoever; nor in their parishes shall use any bull or bear baiting, interludes, plays, or other unlawful exercises or pastimes—on pain that every offender shall pay three shillings and four pence to the poor." King James, on the other hand, was graciously pleased to declare, "that, for his subjects' recreation, his majesty's pleasure was, that after the end of divine service they should not be disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreations—such as dancing either of men or women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other harmless recreations; nor having of Maygames, Whitsunalls, or Morrice dancing, or setting up of Maypoles, or other sports therewith used, so as the same may be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or let of divine service."

Here, then, are two "anointed of the Lord"—both of them "heads of the church"—issuing decrees in *direct opposition* to each other, as to the observance of a day which, fanaticism exclaims, can only be observed in *one particular way*, to obtain the favor of God. The one prohibits all kinds of sports and recreations on Sunday; the other not only permits, but encourages them. No wonder that the *pious* people of England entertain conflicting ideas on this subject, when their rulers—when those whom they are taught to regard as the vicegerents of heaven should have promulgated such opposite laws for the government of their subjects. No wonder that, with these conflicting ordinances staring them in the face, we should find on Sunday, in some parts of the city of London, the houses shut up—the streets deserted and silent, forming a sepulchral contrast to the ordinary bustle; while, in other parts, the sounds of festivity and of mirth—the crowded tea gardens—the numerous water excursions—the public roads thronged with pedestrians and equestrians—all indicate the prevalence of feelings in direct opposition to those entertained by the puritanical, church going part of the community. If any evidence was wanting to show the uncertainty of those regulations prescribed by religion for the guidance of its votaries, it would be found in the very dif-

ferent manner in which the people of England, who all profess to be Christians, conform to an institution that forms so marked a feature in the national character. But the fact is, there is no want of instances of this uncertainty. The whole system is filled with them. From the beginning to the end of the books which form the basis of this system, we meet with nothing but contradictions, and anachronisms calculated to confound, bewilder, and baffle all attempts to ascertain what the authors of them mean. If in one place we think we have discovered the intentions of the writer, we have only to turn the page to find that we have been deceived. If our researches should lead us to conclude that we had certainly ascertained that the truth or correctness of some particular doctrine had been taught by the apostle Paul, we have only to read what Peter says, to be convinced that our first impressions were erroneous. We are thus, in the perusal of the Bible, driven from one fine spun theory to another, until we are actually lost in the mazes of uncertainty. Even the priesthood, who claim the exclusive right of being the interpreters of the scriptures, and the organs of the will of heaven, have always been wrangling, disputing, and exciting discord and carnage among nations, about the true meaning of the "sacred text," without, to this hour, being able to say what that meaning is. If these ambassadors of heaven have been unable to reconcile the inconsistencies, absurdities and contradictions, of the Bible, what else could be expected than that the sovereigns of the earth, who, after all, are but mere puppets in the hands of the priests, should entertain opposite views as to the nature of those observances which constitute a proper solemnization of the Sabbath day.

Although the constitution of the United States recognizes no authority by which one day can be commanded to be kept as more holy than another day, yet, in this state, and through the influence of the priesthood, a law was passed by the legislature, on the 5th day of March, 1813, entitled "An act for suppressing immorality," which, at this moment, stands unrepealed in our statute book, and which contains prohibitions, pains, and penalties as to the observance of the Sabbath that are without a parallel even in the far famed blue laws of Connecticut. The execution of this unconstitutional law was undertaken by a few fanatics in this city, who derived a moiety of the fine imposed for every breach of it. For some time, various sums of money were extorted from hair dressers, and other industrious mechanics, whose limited means compelled them to employ every part of their time in endeavoring to obtain subsistence for their families. But the operation of the law was at last so intolerable—so repugnant to the habits and common sense of the people, that, although no one could be found possessing sufficient courage to move its repeal, it became, in a short time, almost a dead letter. Not but that frequent attempts have been made to revive its obnoxious provisions, particularly as relates to the sailing of steamboats on Sunday. But these attempts have always been successfully resisted. That fanaticism, however, should be allowed to possess the means of attempting, at pleasure, and under the sanction, too, of legislative authority, to carry into operation a measure so injurious to public happiness, is certainly a most disgraceful circumstance, and calls loudly for the united reprobations of a free people.

* * A few days ago, a very silly article, entitled "*Infidelity*," appeared in a morning paper, published in this city; so silly, indeed, that, although a correspondent was at the trouble of cutting it out and sending it to us, we did not consider it deserving of even a passing remark. Nor would we have now noticed the thing, had it not been alluded to in the *National Advocate* in a way that appears to merit some attention. The editor of that paper expresses himself as follows in his last Wednesday's number:

"A morning paper says—'Last Saturday, we lost a subscriber in consequence of an editorial article against infidelity; and not only that, but we got a terrible scolding in the bargain, for supporting the Christian Religion.'"

"In a Christian country it is somewhat curious to be called to an account for defending the *religion of the land*. While it is wise, and according to "the eternal fitness of things," to leave all men in this happy land to embrace whatever religious opinions they please, answerable only to their Maker, we cannot but regard it as a proof among us, not only of extreme folly, but intolerable impudence, for any one to call in question the right of another to promote or defend the cause of Christianity. An infidel, like any other man, has a right to stop his paper if his creed is attacked; and by the same rule, if he were to assail in turn the publisher's creed, we cannot see why he also should not have his *paper* stopped."

The principle that every one has "*a right*" to stop a paper whenever its editor advanced opinions disagreeable to his readers, or whether he did so or not, is so obvious, that we should not have supposed it possible any one pretending to a grain of common sense would venture to question it, had we not learned from the above extract that this had actually been done in the instance alluded to. We regret, however, that any person entertaining liberal principles should have thought it expedient to exercise this "*right*" in a case where the article complained of was so palpably ridiculous. It evidently flowed from a mind imbued with superstition, or from one that wished to court popularity by administering to the depraved taste of those who prefer slander to truth, and ribaldry to sound argument. In all such cases, we consider it the most dignified course to wave our "*rights*," even at the expense of our feelings. We pity the aggressor, because we believe that had his mind not been darkened by the errors of education, he would have been incapable of denying to others that right to think, and to express their thoughts, which he claims for himself.

The editor of the *National Advocate* goes on to say, "It has, in fact, become mighty fashionable to put 'the screws' on newspaper publishers in this city. A man, for instance, who deals about the country whole cargoes of 'liquid poison,' debasing and ruining thousands every year, starts up and says to the printer, You shall not have my patronage unless you stop advertising for theatres and lotteries. The theatre manager withdraws his custom if his nauseating puff is not inserted daily, and the lottery vender has the effrontery to write you a letter that unless you proscribe such a man, or such a one, he will withdraw his, perhaps, more valuable custom. And the politician, with much more reason and justice, perhaps, will not tolerate for a single day that an editor should pre-

sume to speak his own opinion when opposed to that of his patron. To this intolerable censorship of the press we have no notion to submit. To be assailed, for the purpose of diverting a paper from a course dictated by duty and principle, with fears and motives so rank and unworthy, is too insulting and humiliating. Stop, if you please—but no threats, no screws."

All this *sounds* very well. But we would ask, why, only a few months ago, the *Correspondent* was denounced in the columns of this same *Advocate*, as a work so infamous that it ought to be *consigned to the flames*? What was this but an attempt to "proscribe" us; to put the "screws" on us; to introduce "an intolerable censorship of the press;" to assail us "for the purpose of diverting our paper from a course dictated by duty and principle." We readily exonerate the *present* editor of the *Advocate* from any participation in the mandate that doomed our journal, and (if carried the length which fanaticism would justify) would also have doomed ourselves, to the flames. He was not then concerned with the paper; and we should hope, from the tone of the article which we have quoted above, that he is as much disposed to concede to us, as he is to demand for himself, "the privilege of expressing decently, but decidedly and independently, our own opinions." But there is one point on which we presume some disagreement will arise betwixt us. He asserts that "Christianity is the religion of the land," a position which we conceive to be unfounded, and which it was our intention to show was the fact, when we first took up the pen, but which, from want of room, we are compelled to postpone till our next.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Marvellous Discoveries!—I have been much edified, says a late traveller in Italy, with my pilgrimage of the churches. First we saw, at the church of St. Ambrose, in Milan, the very identical gates which St. Ambrose himself shut in the face of Theodosius the Great, and refused him admittance, until he had expiated by a public penance the murder of the Thessalonians; nor was he admitted within them, till, prostrate in the dust, the humbled monarch, at the feet of the proud priest, before the assembled multitude, implored the pardon and absolution of his sins. Miraculous to relate, these gates were carved in wood in the ninth century, and the saint lived in the fourth. But, as the little man who showed them to us said, nothing is impossible. Then I made a most marvellous discovery for myself, in the old church of St. Eustorgio, (the most ancient of Milan,) of the tomb of the three Magi; which I maintain was my own discovery, because I never heard of it before, and have been able to find no account of it in any of the copious books of travels with which we are oppressed. And yet, such was my genius, that upon a huge urn of marble in that venerable church, I espied the inscription "*Sepulchrum Trium Magorum*;" which, on inquiry among the literati, I find is well known among them as the tomb of the three kings—though the literati knew nothing more about them. But, by industriously grubbing in the dust of antiquity, I have satisfactorily ascertained that the bodies

of the three kings were brought by St. Eustorgio himself out of Germany—[how they got to Germany the saint alone knows, for even the antiquarians don't]—in a car drawn by four oxen. But a tiger one night, in the black forest, ate up one of the oxen for his supper, and then, penitent for what he had done, put himself into harness instead of it. [The tiger should have been canonized.] He patiently helped the oxen and the saint to draw the three (dead) kings the whole way to this spot, when they suddenly grew refractory; and not one foot further could the tiger, the saint, or the oxen, make these obstinate three kings go,—so a church was built over them. But, after all, the defunct magi capriciously betook themselves to rambling again with an old archbishop of Cologne, who carried them off to Cologne without so much as a single beast to help him. But my discovery, sinner that I am! was nothing to the discovery made by St. Ambrose, of the holy curb, or bit, which he saw one day lying among a heap of old iron, upon the stall of an old iron merchant in the streets of Rome; and he knew it immediately, from the celestial light which shone upon it, though it had lain unsuspected for ages! This precious article is mounted in gold, enshrined in a box of rock crystal, and suspended amid gilded angels and seraphims, above the tribune of the high altar of the cathedral, so far beyond vulgar gaze that you cannot see it, except once a year on the 3d of May, when two cannons are sent up for it in a sort of car, raised by pulleys, in the same style as the heathen gods and goddesses are hoisted up and down at the opera house. It is then carried in procession about the streets, in memory of St. Carlo Borromeo's pilgrimage through the city, barefooted and barenecked, with a halter about his neck; and this holy bit in his hand, to stop the plague—which it did!

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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Vol. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHRISTIAN IDEAS OF THE DEITY, MISSIONS, &c.

Mr. Editor—According to Christianity it was not possible for the Supreme Being to become reconciled to man—to remove the *infinite* hatred which he entertained against him, without making some sort of sacrifice; and, that this recompense might be complete, he made the greatest possible sacrifice. He had an integral part of himself crucified! Now, by what mode of intellectual proceeding could this self destruction work a reconciliation with criminals, or expiate their offences? Is it conceivable, that if my neighbor injures me, beyond his ability to make amends, the self destruction of one of my limbs, though possessing the power of reproduction, will enable me to pardon him? Can farther infliction of pain remove pain already inflicted? If the feelings of God, of which the Christians speak as of human feelings, were hurt by the vices of man, think ye, who have strength to think impartially, were it not in his power to apply a better and more exemplary restorative, than unnecessary suicide? Or, if he were anxious for the redemption of mankind, do you believe that eternal wisdom would have been guilty of violating its own laws when it could have proceeded in its plans with consistency and to the same effect? Those who hold to such a dogma, virtually charge the Deity with having met with difficulties, which he could not surmount, without an abandonment of the *eternal* order of Nature. They charge him with the incomprehensible absurdity of *altering* his own *unchangeable* laws, of being obliged to resort to the performance of an impossibility—in other words, of working a miracle! If the sins of mankind were so infinitely enormous, as to require nothing short of the sacrifice of a God for their remission, how is it that the fact is so deficient in proof as to admit of a doubt? and how comes it, that it is not promulgated to every man upon the globe, and that three fourths or more of the inhabitants of the earth are ignorant of this important scheme, which condemns them to eternal misery for not believing, or entitles them to endless felicity for giving credence to its doctrines? Such a circumstance should not only be circulated through the world, but should come home to the mind of every individual of the human family, accompanied with physical and satisfactory evidence. Like the motion of bodies, and the light of the sun, it should preclude doubt and defy contradiction; for, if Christians are correct in their assertions, it is a question of infinite magnitude to man, and, as such, ought to supersede every other consideration, and constitute the greatest business of his life. But what is the fact? Look abroad into the world. Cast your

imaginations towards India or Arabia ; those dark abodes which have never been illumined by the blaze of Christian faggots—through whose undisturbed wretchedness, the glorious promises and threatenings of the gospel, the prayers and anathemas of its ministers, the cavils of its professors, have never resounded. Why are they suffered to grope their passage to hell without some friendly God to die for them ? Or, if the atoning sacrifice for these *unconscious* sinners has already been made, why, in the name of justice, have they not been advertised thereof ? since to be saved they must first *believe* ; and to believe, they must first be informed.

But we are told, that the gospel is rapidly spreading through these heathen regions ! Yes ! and it is in this way, that the Christian scheme, founded on the weakness, the ignorance, and the misfortunes of man, has been propagated and preserved. Driven from the haunts of science, it seeks refuge among barbarians ; or, suffered to remain amid the arts, witness degenerate Rome, how soon, alas ! they sink under accumulated persecutions, and crimes, and ceremonies repugnant to reason. From England, where Christianity is but a state engine, turn your eyes to the happy Chinese, who, while he bows before the visible God of his own formation, laughs at the absurdity of an imaginary tripartite Deity ; one of whose mysterious sections undertook, in the shape of humanity, to *destroy itself*, in order to appease the aggregate vengeance, which, as a triple body, it owed to offending man ! He was not educated in the bloody doctrine of vicarious atonements. The sacrifice would appear to him more rational, had it consisted rather of *rice and milk*, than the *flesh and blood* of an *innocent God* !

To an Israelite, who had been instructed in the propitiatory virtues of the blood of goats and bullocks, the idea of a more extensive sacrifice might be natural enough. But, never having been taught that his Pagod delighted in bloody offering, how must his contempt be excited at the idea of a murdered deity ? To him, as to every man divested of Christian prejudice, the necessity which drew the Creator of the universe down upon this *atom* of his works, to suffer the death of a felon, is not discernable. Tell him, that having sinned against an infinite being, nothing short of infinite punishment could satisfy infinite justice ; he will ask why the punishment is not inflicted upon the offender ? Christians answer and say, that *infinite mercy*, on account of the inadequacy of man to atone for his crime, contrived to take the forfeiture upon itself in the execution of the only Son of God ! He will then inquire, why man was so created as to be able to commit sins which it was impossible for him to repair ; since, if God could foresee the consequence of man's transgression, he foresaw the sacrifice of his only begotten son ; and, consequently, created man with the power of forcing, by his wickedness, a God to become "obedient to the death of the cross ?" Priestly sophistry may fabricate a reply, but a man of common sense cannot. Is it to be supposed that such a dogma will be received among the untaught infidels, as they are called, without scrutiny ? a dogma so abhorrent to the very nature of things, and so naturally hostile to all their conceptions of right and wrong ? Wherever it has obtained credence, however, with other

mysteries of this religion, it has been found politic to keep the untutored in perpetual ignorance with respect to all the arts of civilization and the discoveries of philosophy, for a love of consistency is inherent in the human mind. While the Bible, therefore, teaches principles and conduct in utter contravention of the evidence of human reason, and the affections most natural to man, it cannot be expected, that a savage, or even a civilized man, in his right mind, will reject every thing dear and valuable, to follow a phantasm not of his own invention; that he will *hate* his friends and relations, in order that he *might be able* to love Jesus with all his might; that he will love and cherish those who are ready to pluck out his vitals, that he may serve God more thoroughly!! or, that he will believe in miracles, when it is so easily demonstrable, that the laws of Nature are immutable and cannot be for a moment suspended.

If, then, the missionaries are anxious for the preservation of their tragical scheme, they must be cautious how they introduce history, for that will testify against their religion; how they teach geography, for that will belie their *holy book*; how they touch upon astronomy, for the system of Nature is at war with the system of impostors. So certain as the sciences, aided by the art of printing, are diffused, so certain will their progress, slow though sure, undermine this air built fabric, and prostrate its heterogeneous ruins in the dust.

But the Christian priests feel solicitous to provide a habitation for their favorite, in case it shall be expelled from enlightened society. Feeling their influence to be less commanding, they, as might be expected, are desirous to plant the cross in the wilds of Africa and Asia, that when civilized man will no longer suffer imposition, they may lord it over the untutored and the timid, ignorance and fear being the props of this religion! Success may for a time attend the labors of this *pious* fraternity, but the gradual developement of the mental energies of man will follow in the natural order of things; and when even the Hottentot, or the Tartar, shall have become sufficiently enlightened to preserve social order without the restraints of superstition, he will exchange bigotry for liberty; his mind, expanded, will view, in their native purity, the phenomena of Nature, and resign, with just indignation, the stupid schemes of infatuated impostors.

R. P.

HISTORY OF SAMUEL.

Continued from page 102.

Several years, perhaps eight or ten, were passed in the wars of Saul, without any mention of Samuel. Without doubt the successes and popularity of the king affected the prophet. At last he reappears on the scene; he seeks an occasion favorable to his views; he finds Saul; he opens by recalling to his mind that he consecrated him king. This was to induce obedience, through a sentiment of gratitude, to what he was going to say. "Behold," he observes, "what that God now ordains who formerly ordered me to consecrate you. I recollect what the people of Amalek did against my people at the coming up from Egypt." [It was 400 years before; Amalek had opposed the passage of the He-

brews and had slain many.] "Go now, strike Amalek; destroy all that belongs to them; spare nothing; you must slay men, women, children, oxen, sheep, goats," &c. Who is not chilled at such a command! To make God order the extermination of a nation because of a quarrel 400 years before, in which the Hebrews were the aggressors, for they wished to force a passage through the territory of Amalek. But what was the object of Samuel? He had a design in view, and an occasion was wanted to execute it. Some recent rapine of the Bedouin [Arabs] Amalekites had aggravated the Jewish people: Samuel saw in it a popular cause for war, and seized it.

Saul formed an army. The Hebrew text says 10,000 men of Judah, and 200,000 foot soldiers of the other tribes. The Greek says, 400,000 men of one, and 30,000 of the other. The Alexandrian manuscript says only 10,000 of each, which is the most probable. Why these contradictions? Why these absurdities? for, it is absurd to collect 200,000 men to take by surprise a small tribe of Bedouins. Saul departs and surprises the Amalekites in the desert; he kills all those who fall into his hands, takes their king alive, guards him together with the beasts and other booty. Returning triumphant to Mount Carmel, he descends to the valley, where there is an altar, and prepares, says the text, to offer a sacrifice to God of the best among the spoil, according to the rites of the Greeks and Romans. Samuel arrives; but, says the historian, God had spoken to the Seer (during the night) and had said, "I repent of having made Saul king, for he has turned from me and does not obey my orders." This, it is said, frightened Samuel, who cried to the Lord all night. Here, again, is a vision, a conference, a repentance from God! Could our negroes and savages hear such fables without laughing? The Jews believe all; they do not ask any proof of Samuel; he, however, is the only evidence; he only could have written such details. He is here author, actor, judge, and party. Who would be a Jew to believe upon his word.

Samuel arrives, and advances to Saul: "What means," says he, "this noise of cattle that I hear?" Saul answers, "the people have spared the best of the effects of Amalek to offer to the Lord our God; we have destroyed the rest." "Allow me, (replies Samuel,) to relate what God said to me last night." "Speak," says Saul. "When you was little in your own eyes, (says the Lord) did not I make you king of Israel, and now have I not sent you against Amalek directing you to exterminate him; why have you not fulfilled my commandment? why have you sinned and kept the spoils?" "I have obeyed, (replied Saul); I marched, I destroyed Amalek, and brought away the king alive, but the people have kept back these spoils and these victims of beasts, to offer on the altar of God at Galtala." Samuel answers, "Does God demand these offerings and victims, rather than obedience to his orders? You endeavor to ascertain good fortune by a victim, by inspecting the fat of rams; but know that the sin of divination is rebellion, a falsehood, an idolatry; but since you reject the command of God he rejects your kingdom."

Saul, feeble and superstitious, confesses himself culpable; he supplicates the ambassador of God, to pray for the removal of his sin; the priest rejects his prayer, reiterates his deposition, and turns to leave him.

Saul seizes the skirt of his coat or cloak to retain him ; the priest, implacable, makes an effort, by which the part is torn. " God (he repeats) has torn from you the kingdom of Israel and has delivered it to a better : he has so decreed : is he man to repent ? " Saul insists ; " I have sinned, do not dishonor me before my people and before their chiefs ; return to me and I will humble myself before *your God* ; " * and Samuel returned, and Saul humbled himself before Jehovah. Samuel then said, " Bring me Agag, king of Amalek ; " and Agag being come, Samuel said to him, " What you have done to the children of our mothers, that shall be done to yours ; " and Samuel cut him in pieces, [it seems with an axe.] Having performed this exploit, Samuel returned to Ramatah, and during his life did not visit Saul.

What a barbarous scene ! horrible, it must be confessed ; but, I know some more horrible still pass before eyes in our day. Suppose that Samuel had brought Agag to Ramatah ; that there he had confined him in a dungeon, at the bottom of a cistern ; that he had come every day with an attendant to make him undergo various tortures, to burn his feet, his hands, to stretch him upon a wooden horse, to dislocate him, &c. &c. ; all this with honied terms, saying, that it was all for his good ; would not the lot of the victim have been a thousand times more dreadful ? Ah ! much better the open cruelty of the Hebrew priest, compared with the charity of the priests and monks which bless Rome ! Yet, the European governments authorize and suffer such abominations ! But, did Samuel commit such an act without motive, without a projected object ? That would not be in conformity to his deep and calculating character : we will examine these motives.

For ten or twelve years, Saul, by his victories, did not cease to flourish and strengthen his credit in the minds of all the nation. Samuel, finding himself eclipsed, took occasion to flatter the vindictive passion of the Hebrews against the Amalekites. The victory of Saul and taking king Agag, in disobedience to the command of God, who had ordered the extermination of the Amalekites, furnished Samuel with a pretence for striking the audacious blow of anointing a substitute, to rival Saul. He thought it necessary to strike terror into their minds by a preliminary, imposing step, which would make Saul dread the falling upon him of some new celestial anathema. It is certain, that this manœuvre of Samuel succeeded, since Saul did not dare to use any act of violence against him.

In considering the action of Samuel, in a general point of view, political and moral, it presents an astonishing union of pride, audacity, cruelty, and hypocrisy : a little orphan upstart, to decree, from his caprice, the extermination of a whole nation, even to the last living being ! to insult, to abuse a king covered with laurels, become legitimate by his victories, and by the assent of the nation, grateful for the peace and respect which he had procured for them ! a priest to trouble this whole nation by a change of the prince, by the intrusion of a new elect of his choice. Here is found the first germ of that political division of the Hebrews, which, suppressed under David and Solomon, broke out under the imprudent

* These words seem remarkable : there was, then, among the Hebrews other acknowledged Gods, who lived on an equality with Jehovah.

Rheoboam, and prepared the fall of the nation by rending it into two kingdoms, that of Israel and that of Judah.

We see here the fruits of that divine or visionary power, imprudently allowed by a people, stupified by superstition, to a king otherwise worthy of esteem, but feeble minded. We see an imposter who dared to call himself the sent of God, the representative of God, finally God himself, (for such is the transition of ideas which will not fail to occur when the first is tolerated,) turning all this to his profit. The plain historian achieves, without knowing it, the tracing of the portrait and character of Samuel, in saying, "Samuel did not see Saul any more; but lamented his misfortune that God had rejected him." Some time after, God appears to the holy prophet and says to him, "Why do you continue to lament for Saul? Cease to afflict yourself; it is necessary to consecrate another."

Thus Samuel, by his nocturnal cries, acquired the reputation of lamenting the king whom he destroyed. Have Spain and Italy, in the science of their *holy offices*, produced an inquisition more tender or more wicked? On reflection, Samuel answers his God, "If Saul knows that I have consecrated another, he will kill me." Then the God Jehovah explains to him how, by feigning a sacrifice at the house of one named Isai, (Jesse,) in the village of Bethelhem, and how, from the eight male children of that man, he would point out to him the one chosen for the new king. Samuel then fills a small horn with oil, and went to the village of Bethelhem: the villagers, surprised and uneasy, go out to him and say to him, "Peace be with you;" and he replies, "Peace, (sheloum,) I am come to sacrifice; sanctify yourselves, you shall come with me to eat the victim;" and he sanctified Isai and his children, and called them to the repast of the victim; and as they entered, seeing Eliab, the eldest, a handsome man, he says, "Surely this is the anointed of the Lord;" but the Lord whispered to him "No, that is not him: man judges by the appearance, I judge by the heart."

Samuel then made the seven sons of Isai pass by him, and said to him, "God has not made a choice; have you no other children?" Isai answered, there is still a younger one who watches the sheep: Send for him, says Samuel, for we will not sit down to table without him. They went and brought him. He was a young man, ruddy, and of a good and handsome countenance; and God says to Samuel, "Anoint him; that is he;" and Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him, aside from his brethren; and from that moment the spirit of God prospered David; and Samuel returned to Ramah to his house. The spirit of God left Saul, and an evil spirit, sent from God, troubled the king; and his servants proposed to him to send for a man, skilful, to play on the lyre: he agrees; and one of them observed, "I have seen the son of Isai, of Bethelhem, who knows how to play; he is a valiant man, a man of war, prudent in his discourse, and of good person; God is with him: and Saul sent to Isai to demand David; and Isai took a bottle of wine and a young goat, which he put upon an ass, and sent David with the present to Saul. Saul, having seen him, took a liking to him and made him armor bearer, and when the spirit of God seized Saul, David took his lyre, and Saul breathed and was well; and the evil spirit left him."

To be continued.

PRAYING MACHINE.

Mr. Editor—This machine is described by Timkowski, in his "Mission to China," as follows: "Kurde designates a chest with many angles which turns on an axis, and which is placed in the temples of Boudha. These chests are a sort of prayer books for those who cannot read; the sides are covered with prayers, both in the Tibetan and Mongol languages, in large gold letters; they also put into the chest, prayers in both languages, that the worshippers coming to the temple, kneeling before the Kurde, and repeating their 'om ma ni bat me com,' may turn it round as long as their zeal prompts them, which is considered to be as efficacious as if they repeated the prayers themselves;" and there can be no doubt but it is; and if Christians would adopt this machine, it would save them a vast deal of money, which they now pay to their priests to pray for them. I consider this invention of far greater importance than many that have obtained patents in this country.

Mr. Timkowski thus describes the usual manner of burying the dead among the Mongols: "The dying devotee sends for a lama to secure the salvation of his soul and body; the priest, after having inquired the day and hour of the birth of the patient, the circumstances which accompanied it, and the events of his life, decides, according to the sacred books and laws of astrology, whether the body shall be burnt, or committed to the water; if it shall be exposed on a lofty stage, or covered with stones, with or without the clothes, and which of his effects are to be added as offerings." Offerings, I believe, are never forgotten by priests of any country or denomination; but, those that make them are promised repayment a hundred fold in the world to come.

The astrological decision in respect to the disposition of the bodies of these stupid people, is undoubtedly as rational as that made in regard to their souls by the Christian clergy; which, according to them, will be tormented for *ever and ever*, for lack of that knowledge of the Saviour, which it is in the power of the Almighty, without any effort, to communicate in a moment, but which he is represented, by the priests, as arbitrarily withholding.

SCRUTATOR.

THE ANTIDOTE PINE LAND "MIRACLE" VANISHED INTO SMOKE!

Mr. Editor—I perceive, by the last Antidote you sent me, that the modern magi of our country have called upon the "sages" of the Correspondent, to explain away another wonderful, "miraculous" production of Nature, to wit:

"That where a forest of one kind of trees has been cut down, and where nought but this kind of trees was ever before known to grow, an entire different species has shortly sprung up. Cut down the pine forests between Albany and Schenectady, and a forest of oak or hickory, or perhaps both, will spring up in its place; but, how is this new growth brought into existence? There is the question, which has puzzled, and continues to puzzle the philosophic world. Where have the seeds of the new growth been lying for ages, while the land has been covered with

pinces? Neither Columella, nor Varro, not Aristotle, nor Bacon, nor Aldrovandus, nor Buffon, nor Curvier, in short, no philosopher, ancient or modern, has been able to explain this phenomenon," &c.

Now, notwithstanding that I am not old enough for a "sage," nor wise enough for a "philosopher," but only a humble cornplanter in Virginia; yet, I think that I can trace this "phenomenon" or "miraculous" production, to as simple an operation of Nature, as I have the "burning bush" and "blossomed rod" of Moses!

In the first place, every planter or farmer knows, that when a tract of land is overrun with blackberry bushes, they will, after some years, so exhaust or disgust the soil, that they will die, and produce no more blackberries or bushes, spontaneously, for some years.

The wild raspberry bushes in this country are in the same predicament; they may be found flourishing in thickets for some years; but after a certain time they exhaust the land, so that they cannot thrive in the same land very long. Who plants this, "where it is certain no human hand ever planted it" before? Why, the wind, as well as the birds and beasts.

By the same operations, does Nature produce a forest of oak or hickory, instead of the pine, which occupied the same ground before: for, after the pine is cut off, the first tempest or whirlwind that occurs begins to scatter the acorns and nuts from the nearest trees of that description; and, as the soil has been exhausted by the pine and become uncongenial to its future vegetation, the oak and hickory offer the necessary change, and prosper; and although tempests and whirlwinds may be the chief agents employed by God in scattering the seed over the earth, yet much of it is done by birds and beasts.

For instance, we have annually myriads of pigeons, who live on acorns, and who frequently roost at a great distance from the places where they feed. Now, if the modern magi can find out how many acorns a pigeon generally takes into his crop, and how many are killed annually in their flight through the Schenectady pine lands, by the hawks by day and the owls by night, they can easily ascertain how many of these trees have been planted by the pigeons! And, if the magi can discover how many acorns and small hickory nuts have dropped from the trees and lodged in the wool of thousands of sheep, &c., while feeding around these trees, and afterwards fell out, while the sheep wandered or laid down upon the pine lands—then, I fancy the magi will find but little cause left, to "puzzle" either the "sage" or the "philosopher!"

No land, however rich, can produce more than one good crop of *flax* in five or six years, though the same ground will still produce fine crops of grain or vegetables. As to the "miraculous" production of "clover and vetches," I think the magi will be convinced, by this time, that the winds alone are amply sufficient to disperse those seeds where the hand of man never planted them.

If the magi will make a tour to this country, I can show them greater wonders than pine lands producing oak and hickory trees. For, I can show them oak trees, bearing pines, beeches, sycamores, &c., and thus, of course, have, also, our "trees growing where they never grew before," "and where it is certain no human hand ever planted it." But, how do you suppose these "miracles" are performed in our country? Why, some

ancient trees of the forest have a hollow space in the crotch, which retains some water after the rains, and, by the accumulation of dust and rotten leaves, will, in time, have two or three inches of vegetable mould, on which the seed from other kinds of trees are sometimes blown by the winds, and frequently take root and vegetate, at various heights from the ground. However, they never grow to any thing large, and as they were sown by the wind, so they are blown down by the same agent, in a few years after.

C. SHULTZ, Virginia.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible.

By the Secretary.

LECTURE SIXTH.

It is no less remarkable than true, that although all the religions of the earth are decidedly opposed to, and subversive of each other, and that their votaries consign one another to everlasting misery on account of this difference of opinion, they all concur in attributing to Deity the worst passions and weakness of the human heart. They depict him as a peevish old man—a ferocious and vindictive tyrant—a stupid, impotent, and wrathful demon, who is guided by no other rule, who has no standard of action, but that of caprice. In no system do these abhorrent traits of character appear more prominent, than in the Bible account of the fall of man. There, we are told, that after Adam and Eve eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, “they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.”

According to this passage, the God of the Jews was altogether destitute of foreknowledge. He was so little acquainted with the conduct and actions of the beings he had just made, and so incapable of appreciating their principles and motives, that he found it necessary to leave his throne in the heavens, and to descend on that spot of the earth where the first man and woman were placed, before he could ascertain what they were about. Even then, so short sighted was Jehovah, that he could not discover the individuals he was in search of, until he had called to them to know where they had concealed themselves: “And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, where art thou? and he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” What contemptible ideas does this story give us of the Almighty being, who is believed to have created the universe! Notwithstanding his omnipotence, he was not only totally ignorant of what was going on, but he had to take a walk in the garden, in the cool of the day, in order to refresh himself previous to making the necessary inquiries. At last, after tracing the man and woman to their hiding place, it was still requisite to interrogate the fugitives as to the cause of

their concealment, and to trace the story, from one end to another, up to its original source, before he could understand the business, or discover the wicked scheme, which had so completely defeated all his beneficent intentions, and diffused sin and misery through the whole fabric of his works. "And he said, who told thee that thou wast naked? hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat? And the man said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, what is it that thou hast done? And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

After giving us this account of a dialogue, in which God is represented as a being possessing no penetration, and who was compelled to interrogate the workmanship of his own hands, in order to get at the truth, the writer proceeds to tell us what effect the disclosure had on this deity. First, he turns to the serpent, and says, "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and has eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it—cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns, also, and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

It is impossible to reflect on this narrative without perceiving, that it represents God as one of the most wrathful and choleric beings that can be supposed to exist. The priests of Christianity tell us, that the Deity is "long suffering and *slow to wrath*;" that he would rather sinners should live than die, in order to give them time for repentance. But here, in this very Bible, which, they also say, God inspired, he is represented as a passionate, furious despot, who, without allowing himself a moment for consideration, curses man, woman, animals, the earth and all its productions, for an offence which could not be avoided, because he, the Almighty, had so arranged matters that it must be committed. Even could this arrangement have been affected by any of the creatures he had made, still the offence was of too trivial a nature to excite anger in the bosom of any one pretending to rationality; yet, for this venial transgression, the Deity inverts, almost in a moment, and disorders the beautiful fabric, which he had only a few hours before pronounced superlatively excellent. Before the sun had set for the first time, the whole frame of Nature, which he had just formed and embellished, was condemned to ruin and confusion. In the morning, God said all things were good: in the evening, all things were accursed! How fleeting and inconstant was the glory of the things created by that unchangeable being to whom the formation of the world is ascribed. A work that was

six days in elaborating, and bringing to perfection, and that by an omnipotent architect, was ruined in a few hours, because this architect had not the judgment to perceive, that a moment's cool reflection would have enabled him to remedy the mischief, if any mischief had actually been done.

But, so far from what is called the disobedience of our first parents being mischievous, it appears to me that its effects were beneficial; for, what was the transgression? Why, it was eating the fruit of a tree which possessed the extraordinary virtue of conferring a knowledge of good and evil on all who partook of it. Although we are assured, that God made man perfect, it is clear that knowledge was not included in this perfection; for man was at first incapable of distinguishing good from evil. How ridiculous, then, was it to tell him that it would be *evil* to violate a law, and *good* to observe it, when, as yet, he had no idea of good or evil; and how capricious, unjust, and cruel was it to curse the serpent, the man, and the woman, for not knowing what God had purposely concealed from them. In this conduct it is easy to discover the model by which the priesthood form their notions of knowledge. Jehovah punishes mankind for wishing to know good and evil: the priests denounce all free inquiry. God claims the exclusive right of deciding what constitutes obedience and disobedience: the priests arrogate the prerogative of teaching mankind the duties they owe to the same deity. The clergy, in fact, pretend to be the only interpreters of the will of heaven, and the only guardians of knowledge on this earth. Afraid that the people should become too well informed, they prescribe to them a certain course of reading, from which, if they deviate, they are lost. Who does not perceive the inconsistency of this conduct? If the present system of religion be the best possible, the better it is understood; and the more the people in general are qualified to appreciate its merits, the better for the system itself. But it has ever been the policy of tyranny, whether civil or religious, to keep the mass of the people in profound ignorance. Hence it is, that among some Christians the free use of that book which is said to contain a revelation of the divine will is prohibited; and even where it is permitted to be read, no one dare to understand it contrary to the interpretations of the church. This effectually puts an end to all doubt, by prohibiting all inquiry. In this, it must be acknowledged, the priesthood act with consummate policy, as they are aware that if mankind were to exercise their own judgments in perusing the Bible, this would prove as fatal to their authority as all the liberal writings that have ever been published. The Italians have a proverb, which says, that among the blind, the one eyed is a king; and our clergy are of opinion, not, perhaps, without reason, that their own pretensions to superior attainments and refinement, shine all the better for being contrasted with the ignorance of the great mass of the population.

It is to the extravagant representations given of Deity in the Bible, that we are also to trace all those wrathful and malignant feelings which govern the mass of mankind. They are told to imitate a being who gets into a passion, and pronounces curses on his own works, without allowing himself time for reflection. If the God we are enjoined to worship indulges in these fits, and in these outrages towards the human species, why should not his adorers imitate him, and, instead of showing kind-

ness and forbearance to those who may have displeased them, curse and swear at them, and do them all the injury in their power. If we are to take Jehovah as an example, and to obtain heaven only by resembling him, I do not see how we can do otherwise than call down his vengeance on our fellow men, and render them as miserable as possible, when they do not exactly conform to our views, or refuse to comply with our capricious wishes. Why is it that the elder children of a family beat and abuse the younger, or, when they have none of their own species on whom they can vent their spleen, maltreat domestic animals, or violently attack the tables, chairs, or any thing within their reach? It is because their parents have set them the example, by their severities, in imitation of those chastisements, which their priests tell them are inflicted by their heavenly father, who is perpetually angry with his children. Religion, in fact, has been the cause of all the cruelty and oppression that has been committed on the earth. By holding up a sanguinary and implacable deity as an object of adoration, mankind become alike sanguinary and relentless. By exhibiting him as a being who delights in tormenting his creatures, in sporting with their calamities, and in being gratified with the shedding of blood, his worshippers become, what we every where find them to be, insensible to the wants and sufferings of their fellow men, intolerant and rapacious; and, where they are not restrained by public opinion, or by the law, they are prepared to shed the blood of all who maintain that God is a beneficent being, and that the evil which exists in the world originates in their own corrupt institutions.

When the writer of Genesis makes Jehovah curse the serpent because it enticed Eve, he evidently intended to excite disgust at the low condition in which it is said to have been reduced, in order that all future generations might avoid an animal so dangerous. But do the people of any country show this disgust: or is there any thing in a serpent basking in the sun, or moving gently along the surface of the earth, to cause alarm, or even dislike? For my part, I never see a serpent in either of these positions but what I admire it for its beautiful skin and motions: And were it not for the effects of education, I should feel disposed to take hold of the animal rather than to shun it. Nor is it true that serpents are doomed to crawl for ever on their bellies, and to eat the dust; for they may be frequently seen erect, climbing trees, and devouring frogs and other reptiles. I should, indeed, be disposed to deny the fact altogether, that serpents ever sought nourishment in the dust of the earth.

It is well ascertained, that so far from people entertaining a natural dread of, or even dislike to, serpents, the Hivites adore them. Aristotle speaks of a serpent that was held sacred in Thessaly. Conner, in his history of Poland says, that the Lithuanians employ serpents as penates. Jackson, in his account of Morocco, states, that there is scarcely a family there without a serpent; and Bruce informs us, that at the source of the Nile, the inhabitants pray to serpents, because they teach the coming of good and evil. They also domesticate them, as the Romans did the sacred chickens, for the purpose of prophecying. But the homage paid to serpents was not confined to nations unacquainted with the Christian religion. During the last century, the custom of carrying serpents in the religious processions, which commenced about the year 500 of our pre-

sent era, was common in France. Every church had its serpent or dragon. At first, these allegorical representations were intended to exhibit the triumph of the new religion over paganism. But the visible part of the worship soon became the most important part of that religion in the estimation of the multitude, who are most attentive to what affects their senses. Hence the transition from astonishment and terror, to that of respect for its supernatural powers, which imagination and credulity attributed to the dragon or serpent. At Poitiers, in France, it was piously surnamed "the good *Saint Vermin*;" fervent prayers were addressed to him, chaplets were eagerly brought to him to touch, and all the observances which the superstitious introduce into their worship, were practised on the days devoted to his saint serpentship. In the year 1771 this species of worship was in full vigor in all the catholic churches of the Netherlands; and some remains of it may be still observed in Europe, in the emblematical figures of St. George and St. Michael, in many pictures with which the walls of the churches are decorated. These facts completely destroy the idle tale about enmity having been placed between the seed or offspring of the woman and that of the serpent; and as to the *biting* the heel, this is nothing more than what was to be expected of any reptile when it felt its head to be bruised. In some countries, the empirics imagine that the bite of a serpent is cured by *bruising the head*. Burrow says that this is considered senative among the inhabitants of China, and among the Hottentots and Javanese. It will also be observed, that the book of Genesis assigns no motive for the serpent tempting Eve. On the contrary, it appears that what the animal told her was the *truth*, without disguise or exaggeration. How unjust then, to punish an act, in which there was no moral turpitude, and to call that gratuitous villany, by which the knowledge of good and evil was introduced into the world.

To be continued.

Mr. Owen's Communities.—It appears by late Glasgow papers that Mr. Owen, on his way to New Lanark, in Scotland, paid a visit to the Orbiston Cooperative Society, which was established about 18 months ago, and that he found it in a most flourishing condition. It is composed of nearly 300 individuals; each, on an average, lives upon 2s. 6d. sterling per week, though 10s. is allotted to each; the surplus goes to the common stock. The building, in erecting, cost about £13,000; the land £20,000; and £4,000 additional for improvements. The amount of land 330 acres—40 acres of which are of wheat—35 acres oats—9 acres turnips. They have 12 cows, and a considerable piggery, containing about 30 pigs. They have also five or six horses. Ten hours are allotted for each to labor. During the whole existence of this institution, only two men had been expelled for misconduct. No punishments are inflicted on any, young or old. Mr. Owen, before leaving for Glasgow, read to them the particulars of his American journey—the purport of which was, that he had established 9 or 10 institutions of the same kind in America, from which he augured the happiest result. He requested that they should put no faith in the statements of the public prints of the day, and encouraged them to persevere as they had hitherto done.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Marriages at Gretna Green.—Gretna Green is a small parish, situated immediately on the north side of the small river Sark, which forms the boundary between Scotland and England, and is the nearest and most easily accessible point in Scotland to those from the sister kingdom. To this Gretna owes its present greatness! Not Gretna, but a small village in the immediate neighborhood, unknown to fame, called Springfield, is the place where all the marriages are made; and it is calculated that about 365 (one a day) take place every year. Of the two priests now existing, one is named *Lang* alias “the bishop,” the other, *Elliott*. The form of marriage at Gretna is very brief and simple: the parson (bishop or blacksmith) asks the parties whence they come, and what parish they belong to, for the purpose of being entered in the register. They are asked if they be willing to receive each other for better, for worse, &c. This being ascertained, and a wedding ring passed between them, they are declared to be married persons. The fees paid to the parson are said to be sometimes very handsome, so much as a hundred pounds being occasionally paid him for his five minutes’ work—high wages for a common laborer to receive, by merely putting on a black coat! On such occasions, house rents are equally extravagant, a couple of guineas being unblushingly asked for the use of a private room for the space of five minutes after the ceremony. Of those who admire English law as the perfection of human reason we would ask—if it be for the public interest to prevent clandestine marriages on the one side of the Tweed, is it not equally so on the other? On the English side of the Tweed, they will not allow dissenters to escape the church ceremony, although it be contrary to their conscience to submit to it; but if they choose to step over to the other side, the same persons may marry without any ceremony at all. Here the marriage must be solemnized by a regular clergyman of the church; there it may be done by a tinker. This system is so remote from reason, that it resembles more the laws attributed to witchcraft.

Fable of a Guebre Prophet.—Carried by an angel, says the fable, to a spot whence he beheld the place of torment of the wicked, and informed by the angel of the various reasons for the various conditions in which he saw the several sufferers, his attention was at length particularly caught by the situation of a man whose whole naked body was surrounded by raging flames, with the single exception of his left foot! “And what,” said the prophet to the angel, “what, my lord,” is the cause of that particular exception?” “The man whom thou beholdest,” returned the angel “was, in his lifetime, a wicked king. His oppression of his subjects was grievous, and thou seest how he suffereth for his guilt! But, one day, that miserable tyrant (tyrant though he was) walked near to a sheep cote, where it chanced that he saw a lamb tethered to a stake, and was hungering after the remainder of a parcel of hay which had been placed near it, but of which it had already consumed all that was within its reach. The wicked prince feeling, upon that occasion, one emotion of pity, stretched

out his left foot, and pushed the hay within reach of the lamb! Thou perceivest, then, O prophet! how surely thy God remembereth every deed of mercy among all the sons of men; how he loveth all his creatures; and how he beareth in mind every act of love which is performed for them! A single act of mercy, bestowed upon a hungry lamb, has saved from the flames of hell the left foot even of a wicked tyrant!"

Tolling of Bells.—There are dying as well as dead people in the world, and sick people who will die if they are not encouraged. What must be the effect of this mortal note unceasingly reiterated in their ears? Who would set a whining fellow at a sick man's door, to repeat to him all day long, "Your neighbor's dead—your neighbor's dead?" But you say, "It is to remind the hearty, and not the sick, that we sound; and the few must give way to the many." Good! it delights me to hear you say so; but in this particular instance allow me to think you are mistaken. I differ from a belfrey with hesitation. Triple bob majors are things before which it becomes a philosophic inquirer to be modest. But have we not memoranda enough to this good end? Have we not coughs, colds, fevers, plethoras, deaths of all sorts occurring round about us, old faces, churchyards, accidents infinite, books, muskets, wars, apothecaries, kings? Is not the whole nation swallowed up in grief when a great statesman dies? Does not even a rich old lady die now and then? You remind the sick and the dying too forcibly: but you are much mistaken if you think the healthy regard your importunity of advice in any other light than that of a considerable nuisance. It would be useful to know how many deaths are hastened by a bell; at least, how many recoveries are retarded. There are sensitive persons, not otherwise in ill health, who find it difficult to hear the sound without tears. What must they feel on a sick bed!

A Pious Broker.—A stock broker who was recently announced as a defaulter, and who belonged to "good society," is said to have been mainly indebted for the great increase of his connexions to the following expedient. He became a regular attendant on Sundays at a church where the duty was performed by one of the most popular preachers of the day, where he showed remarkable assiduity in presenting books of the hymns, and in pointing out the particular one performed, to those rich elderly ladies who happened to be near him. In all these books, of which he had taken due care to provide himself with a sufficient quantity, were written his name, profession, and the situation of his office. Of course, when any of these wealthy dowagers found occasion either to buy or to sell stock, the name of the polite Mr. —, who had been so attentive to them at church, was sure to occur to their recollection. So pious a gentleman must be of course trustworthy, and to him, therefore, the care of their transactions in the funds was confided. Many of his clients, we hear, have since found powerful reasons for repenting of the confidence thus placed.

Shameful Law.—The viscount de B—, (says Grimm, in his memoirs,) a young man of rank, was educated at the Royal Military School at Paris; he then entered into the service, his first years in which were distinguished by a series of knavery and meanness. The most atrocious of his misdeeds was that to which mademoiselle Camp fell a victim. The young viscount, when staying at Montauban, became intimate in the family of this unfortunate lady. He called himself a protestant, and under that character married mademoiselle Camp, according to the rites of the protestant church, that is to say, without the interference of the catholic priest: he had one child by her, a daughter. After having lived with her publicly, as his wife, for some years, at Montauban, during which he spent all her fortune—after having, in consequence of his irregularities and debts, been for some time imprisoned at Fort l'Eveque, he quitted his confinement to marry another woman at Paris, according to the established rites, treating his union with mademoiselle Camp only as an affair of concubinage. The atrocious code with regard to protestantism, established by Lewis XIV., at the instigation of the *devout* Maintenon, to the eternal shame of France, supported admirably the conduct of young B., which in other civilized countries would have led him to the gallies at least, if not to the scaffold. His marriage with mademoiselle Camp was declared null, by a decree of the new parliament; nay, this body not only also adjudged damages to a man who was never worth a penny, but, with a barbarity wholly unheard of, as if the poor young woman's case was not already hard enough, ordered that her child, a little girl, should be taken from her and educated in a convent. Such was the law of France in 1772. Is not such the law of Ireland in 1827?

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 10. NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 29, 1827. Vol. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RELIGIOUS TESTS.

Mr. Editor—An opinion has been too successfully propagated, that a dread of torture in a future life is the only efficacious means of insuring veracity in giving evidence before a judiciary tribunal. This opinion is understood to have been sanctioned by high legal authorities in England, and, I have learned, it was, some few years ago, acted upon in this state, as *common law*, in an action before one of our judiciary officers, and an unbelieving witness rejected.

By inspection of the United States constitution, and that of the state of New York, it will be seen that citizens of any religion, or of no religion, are equally eligible to office, and that the oath in each case is framed without any mention of, or reference to Deity, Bible, or creed. By the constitution of the United States, Art. 2d, Sec. 1st, the oath of office for the President runs thus: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the constitution of the United States." By the constitution of this state, Art. 6th, Sec. 1st, the members of the legislature, and all our state officers, are to take the following oath: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the constitution of the United States, and the constitution of the state of New York, and that I will faithfully execute the office of — according to my best ability;" and it is added, that "*no other oath, declaration, nor test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust.*" Nor is there any disqualification recognised in either of these constitutions, except for infamous crimes *to be defined by the legislature*. See Art. 2d, Sec. 2d, of our state constitution. It hence appears, that any citizen, whose reputation is such as to procure his election or appointment to any office or trust, is not, by his religious belief or unbelief, disqualified, and that when so elected or appointed, he is legally called on to take the qualifying oath. Yet, by the inquisitorial rule acted upon by our judiciary, to which I have alluded, though he be President of the United States, he may be rejected by a court of law as an incompetent witness!

This injurious privation, however pure the motives which prompted its introduction, will be found of grievous application in this day and land of light; especially in this state, where numerous Christian societies, and others of unquestioned veracity, are to be its victims. Our country is the recipient of emigrants from every shore, and of every creed; and when these are legally naturalized, they are equally invested with all the rights of freemen; and, however it may be lamented by the

orthodox, it is a fact, deplored from many a pulpit, that, in every grade among us, doubters and unbelievers of the doctrine in question are extremely numerous, and that many of them fill some of our most important offices with the fairest reputation; and is it proper that such, or others who may be called to discharge similar duties, should suffer the degradation *introduced from an old government of church and state*? Or can we doubt that its victims will impute to the legislature that countenances such injustice, sectarian partiality and intolerance?

Hudson, Aug. 15, 1827.

JUVAMOR.

HISTORY OF SAMUEL.

Continued from page 134.

The preceding account presents several difficulties to resolve: First, I cannot reconcile the presentation of David to Saul, with that of chapter 17th, which, on the occasion of the combat with Goliath, after this, informs us, that when the shepherd David offered to fight the giant, and he was under this name presented to Saul, this prince inquired *who he was? whose son is he?* He did not know him then; he had not seen him. The first version, then, is false. To explain this contradiction, I see no other way but to admit, as I have already stated, that there were two or three memoirs of cotemporary authors; that these authors related certain facts in a different manner; and that the last compiler, embarrassed in a choice, placed these different accounts one after the other, either through negligence and want of examination, or that he did not dare to make a selection among statements all equally imposing. This solution will answer for many other blunders. In the second place, how did Samuel, who seemed to fear the vengeance of the king, determine to encounter and brave it? It is clear that a man of his cast is not adventurous without knowing his ground, or without having prepared his ways and means. See how at first he filled his neighborhood with the noise of his nocturnal lamentations, of his cries to God for the misfortune of Saul, or the celestial disgrace of his dear pupil. This rumor must have come to the ears of Saul, living peaceably, some leagues off, on his farm at Gebah. He had learnt that God had excited the prophet to make him anoint his successor; he knew the implacable character of that God, who never willed in vain, and who, perhaps, threatened to kill Samuel. The holy man, between two dangers, found himself in a great strait; he, however, calculates, if Saul is violent, he is generous and kind; that, moreover, he is very religious; well persuaded of his divine mission; and well convinced, that if the God Jehovah has determined his overthrow nothing would prevent it. These divines have numerous resources; a man like Samuel must have had many secretly devoted to him in Saul's house and about him; he would have known that not daring to strike the representative of God, the king would rather have directed his attempts against his future rival. In this situation, Samuel would have calculated, that, in case they succeeded, his duties would be supplied; that there would be yet time for him to withdraw, under the

pretence that God had his reasons for raising and deposing whom he would, and that he must only be silent.

We must, however, remark, that since the sacrifice at Maspha, and the scene of the rupture, sufficient time had elapsed for all these preliminaries ; so that the step of Samuel, in anointing David, was not so imprudent as we should at first suppose. Nevertheless, we must perceive that it would require to be done without noise, if not with great secrecy. But, how could the secret be kept if the anointing had many witnesses ? The objection is correct ; but the text is not precise on this point : it says, indeed, that the old men were invited to the feast, but no mention is made of them at the anointing. David's brothers only are spoken of, but it is not said *in presence* of his brothers, according to the ordinary and proper expression. The word used is *aside*, near his brothers, (be karb.) The oblique expression is remarkable : might it not be, that the anointing really had no witness but Isai ; [that of Saul had none, Samuel having sent away the servant ;] and who can be the narrator ? It must be Samuel. Not daring to use the word, in presence, he adopted the equivocal one, *aside*, or *near*. But, supposing the seven brothers were present, they could still have kept the secret, notwithstanding their jealousy. Dissimulation and discretion, in domestic affairs, are fundamental traits in Arab manners. Moreover, there was cause of fear to all ; for, the king, according to Asiatic custom, would have exterminated the whole family. A very little after, the case of the high priest Achimelek occurred, whom Saul had massacred, merely because he gave bread to David. We must, therefore, believe that the secret was kept, since Saul did not begin his persecutions till some time after the anointing. But, what reason had Samuel to make choice of a simple shepherd to convert him into a king ? This, doubtless, was contrary to our modern customs in Europe and America ; but, in Asiatic manners in general, and in Arab manners in particular, such a choice has nothing strange or unreasonable. Do we not every day hear of similar occurrences in Turkey, where bakers and braziers become pachas, even viziers ? We must recollect that the Hebrew nation was composed of peasants who were agriculturists, of some merchants, not rich, and of a number of priests, but little cultivated. The condition of shepherd, or grazer of cattle, which forms an important branch of the riches and property of a family, was not inferior to any other rural employment ; and, perhaps, required more talents and capacity than the routine of cultivating olives, vines, and grain. At least it gives more leisure for the improvement of the intellectual faculties.

The governing animated beings, who have their sphere of intelligence, their passions, their wills, is more calculated than we should suppose to exercise the reasoning powers of the human intellect, and to prepare it for similar functions over beings of an order more elevated, but of a nature little similar. Chance ordered it, that some happy faculties were found united in a simple shepherd. How many other peasants have existed no worse organized, who only wanted an occasion to develop them ? David, born on an enemy's frontier, was early accustomed to alarms, to trouble, and to dangers of all kinds ; he had to contend against hardy robbers, and against subtle thieves, such as the country still produces.

This taught him that courage and crafty spirit which he afterwards displayed.

The combat with the lion and the bear, of which he boasted before Saul, may not have been a fiction, since it is proved by several passages, that at that time there were on the frontier of the desert, forests and woods, which, there as elsewhere, have disappeared from increase of population and ravages of war. Such a young man might be remarkable in the neighborhood, especially when to courage and craft he added the agreeable talent of playing on a musical instrument. This taste was always peculiar to shepherds, from the great leisure which they enjoyed. Their eyes alone are occupied in watching their flocks; all the other faculties remain free for meditation and thought. The learned give David a large and heavy harp, without recollecting that he carried his to the fields and that he danced lightly with it before the ark: it is clear that this was the lyre or lute, which at the same time was used in Greece. The age of David, at the period of which we speak, could not be less than 20 years; at least so say the translators; since the servants of Saul describe him as a vigorous young man, and fit for war. If his reputation could reach to the king's house, where there was little cause to know him, could it not have come to the ears of Samuel, who had so much interest in finding a person capable of fulfilling his views? This seer, so extensively connected, must have heard of a young man so handsome, so brave, and so prudent in his conversation. He might have followed him in his mind's eye for a time sufficient to know him; at least, to appreciate his worth; he did not come to the house of Jesse without knowing what he had to do; and when he or his copyist narrates the continual colloquies, in a low voice, of the God Jehovah, he supposes always he has to do with Jewish readers.

From the *unction* of David, Samuel is seen but once more in the scene, namely, when the holy shepherd, having become the son in law of Saul, is persecuted by the king and escapes to Ramatah, where Samuel accompanies him, to seek an asylum in the brotherhood of the prophets at Naioth, before Saul went there also. This was a hazardous step, because, by this time he must have been informed of the secret anointing of David. But Samuel, always cunning, profited by this interview to appease the king and make his peace with him. He would have shown that he could not avoid the order of the terrible Jehovah; he would declare to him that henceforth it was the business of God to direct his new elect, and that personally he should not meddle with any thing. This same declaration would free him from the tutelage of David, who was becoming more and more dangerous; for, a little while after, David, having received an asylum and succor from the high priest Achimelek, the whole family of this priest was massacred without pity, by order and in presence of Saul himself. We have a right to suppose, that a man so cunning as Samuel, and who knew so well the character of his former pupil, had time enough to study the progress of his natural fury and of his disease; and the proof of the reserved conduct of the prophet after this interview is, that we see him two years afterwards die peaceably, leaving in the mind of Saul so high a veneration for his memory, that this prince, the evening before the battle in which he perished, hoped only for conso-

lation and aid from the shade of Samuel, which he caused the magician of Endor to invoke. The examination of this phantasmagora scene would be a new, curious, and instructive one to show the customs of the times, but it would now lead me too far from the subject.

To be continued.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH. BY C. SCHULTZ.

Continued from page 119.

148. It is a fact, that the first accounts of Christ were not published, or communicated publicly, but rather confined to those who were most easily duped or too much interested in the new system to expose its impositions. But, that they were too few to be known as a new sect about sixty or seventy years after, is proved, by the perfect silence of Josephus respecting them; for, there cannot be a doubt, that a historian, who, like him, devotes pages to more trifling concerns, could omit noticing one of the most important affairs relative to his own nation.

149. But it is a fact, that there were many persons named Jesus among the Jews; for, in the Apocrypha we have two mentioned, one in Josephus, (not the forged one,) and one in the New Testament. But as the character of Josephus's Jesus bears a striking resemblance to that of the Christians', (witness their prophecies against Jerusalem,) it is evident, that the Christians, for want of materials to make out the life of their hero, blended both in one; for, when the fishermen found that their master was dead enough, and all their fair prospects blasted, they hid his body, and dressed up some one, who resembled him, in the same clothes, and who, by appearing at night and not speaking, served to carry on the farce a few weeks longer. At all events, the testimony of fishermen, who were in danger of losing their influence as well as indolent livings, ought not to weigh much in a cause which involves the happiness of mankind!

150. Nay, there is every reason for believing, that Paul, or some other interested priest, had seen or read the life of the "Redeemer" Hindoo god Creeshna; and if they did not steal the name of Christ from him, they, evidently, have stolen all the most important and most credible parts from the life of Creeshna! Let the following parallel speak for itself: Creeshna became incarnate, in order to redeem the world from wickedness—he was predicted—born of a virgin, in or near a manger—a star appeared at his birth, and so did angels—great rejoicing took place in the skies—the magi assembled—the king, hearing of his birth, ordered every male child to be slain—Creeshna's parents fled with him to another country. Creeshna surpasses Christ; for, while the latter performed no miracles in his youth, the former performed many; Christ raised some few from the dead, but Creeshna many; Christ died once to save the world, but Creeshna several times; Christ entered hell once, but Creeshna plunged into several; Christ took his seat in heaven, and so did Creeshna; Christ is the most popular in the Christian Trinity, and so is Creeshna in the Hindoo Trinity. Creeshna was laboring thirty-six years for the benefit of man; he ascended to heaven in the sight of a great multitude; on that day the laws of Nature were reversed; for,

"darkness," "deep darkness" overwhelmed the earth, and the sun and moon were both eclipsed; and what is equally surprising, he gave a memorable supper or feast, where wine, &c. was used on the day before his death or disappearance!

171. It is a fact, that God never performed more than one miracle, but that was one worthy of a God, and no less than the miracle of Creation, when he produced the whole universe in one second of time! As for the host of petty miracles, with which your priests torment the ignorant, they required no higher agent than that of mortal imposters.

173. It is a fact, that every priest pretends to have a "call from God;" but, where there is one who thinks he has a call from God, there are thousands who are certain that they are called by "Mammon."

174. It is a fact, that every miracle is a pretended suspension or perversion of the permanent and unchangeable laws of Nature as prescribed by God himself.

175. It is a fact, that the only way to retain your mind free and uncorrupted as God gave it, is never to assent to any doctrine, that is not perfectly clear to your understanding.

176. It is a fact, that you may as well seek for Christ in a brothel, as for true religion from a salaried preacher.

177. It is a fact, that all "mysteries" are the offspring of cunning and superstition, and wither and die whenever they are exposed to the light rays of truth.

178. It is a fact, that "innovators" have generally proved to be benefactors to the human race: Moses and Christ were innovators in religion; Galilis and Columbus, Newton and Franklin in philosophy; and Washington, with a whole nation, in politics.

179. It is a fact, that the priesthood is the offspring of ignorance alone, and no impartial or enlightened mind will ever stand in need of a priest.

180. It is a fact, that we have heard an episcopalian priest, who was also a great mason, stigmatize his neighbors as a "set of Presbyterian sons of b-h-s!"

181. It is a fact, that we have found a presbyterian priest, who did not know which of his sects believed in the doctrine of "Consubstantiation!"

182. It is a fact, that we have heard a baptist preacher, who declared, that he would not care if every book in the world was destroyed, provided the New Testament was saved!

183. It is a fact, that we have met with priests, who have sent us and our "Memoir" to hell, without ever reading it.

184. It is a fact, that if you take away the mercenary part of the reward of the priests, there is not one in a thousand who would not abandon his "heavenly call," as well as his "flock, to the care of the devil.

186. It is a fact, that every religion which cannot support itself by example alone, is unworthy of your respect.

186. It is a fact, that every religion which cannot flourish without the aid of penal laws, must be intended for knaves and hypocrites!

187. It is a fact, that every advocate for religious penalties must be a knave as well as a hypocrite, and also a foe to equal rights of conscience!

188. It will therefore follow, as a rational conclusion from facts, that as every state has enacted penal laws in favor of religious duties, and contrary to their constitutions, it must be manifest to all, that hypocrisy is now the only highway open to popularity, honors, or wealth.

189. It is a fact, that man has ever been a slave; for, if he, occasionally, broke through the chains of his tyrant king, he was sure to fall into those of the priests! O! man! man! how richly have you deserved the eternal slavery which you have suffered, for abandoning your God and your sound reason, and confiding in the interested and perverted reason of a priest!

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible;

By the Secretary.

LECTURE SIXTH.

Continued from page 141.

In the case of Eve, nothing could be more barbarous than to subject her to the dominion of her husband, who was the proper offender. Even if she had tasted the fruit knowing that it was forbidden, why put it in the power of her husband to maltreat her, when it was his duty to have stood by her in the moment of danger, and to have taken on himself the refutation of the sophistry of an animal so cunning as the serpent is said to have been? Instead of dooming his wife to abject submission for her weakness, God ought to have subjected Adam to that fate for his gross negligence, to say nothing of his want of gallantry. This part of the story has evidently been introduced to justify those laws, regarding the treatment of females, which disgrace the codes of nations calling themselves civilized, and of which, we, in this Christian country, are not without a remnant. Who can read, without feeling indignation, the accounts which sometimes appear in our public papers, of judges sanctioning the infliction by the husband of bodily chastisement on the wife, as a matter of unquestionable right, conferred by God on these self appointed "lords of the creation?" They may, indeed, be *good Christians* who enforce the observance of this law; but certain am I that they are not entitled to the name of *good men*.

But the placing Eve under a domination, which is frequently exercised in the most barbarous manner, and which, wherever it exists, deprives females of the advantages conferred on them by Nature, and dooms them to a state of abject servility, is not the only punishment said to have been inflicted on Eve for indulging her curiosity. "Unto the woman he said, I will *greatly multiply* thy sorrow and conception." But, how was the sorrow of Eve to be *multiplied*, when, as yet, she had not conceived, nor experienced sorrow? So far, also, from childbirth being a sorrowful occurrence, it is the cause of joy and exultation to most females; and we

know that, in many countries, the birth of a child is attended with little or no pain to the mother.

With regard to Adam, the story says, that God cursed the *ground* because he had hearkened to the voice of Eve, and eaten of the forbidden fruit. This curse, it appears, consisted in rendering the earth unproductive *without tillage*. Now, if we turn to the account given of the garden of Eden, we shall find that Adam was placed there for the express purpose of "tilling the ground." There could, therefore, be no punishment in making him do the precise same thing *after* his fall, which he had to do *before* it. But, it is added, "in sorrow shalt thou eat of it." Eat of what? Why, of the *ground* which God had cursed. This, were it true, would certainly be a severe punishment. But, like what is said about the serpent *licking the dust*, we find it contradicted by the history of all nations; who, it is certain, have always lived on animal or vegetable food, and never on the ground or earth. As a special favor, God gave Adam "the herb of the field" for food, in addition to the ground; but, it does not appear, that *fruits* were included in this grant. The power of vegetation was limited to "thorns and thistles;" yet we find, that the earth is capable, by proper cultivation, of producing whatever is desirable by man.

The denunciation "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground," may have been verified in the case of Adam, and, perhaps, in that of some of his immediate posterity. But, as a universal rule, experience demonstrates its falsity. Neither kings, priests, nobles, nor those born to inherit large estates, obtain their bread by labor. These drones of the hive—these hornets, who sip the honey formed by the physical efforts of others, are entire strangers to those exertions, which raise perspiration on the face or brow of the industrious. If it had been ordained by God, that none of the human species would be exempted from working, as we are assured the text in Genesis means, how is it, that, in every nation on the earth, numberless individuals are to be found, who are engaged in no active employment? Why is it, that the priesthood, for instance, contrive to live in affluence and idleness, in spite of this ordinance, which, they tell us, emanated from Jehovah? Either it was to be universal in its influence, or it was not? If universal, in what light are we to regard those stubborn facts, which give the lie to this universality? If not universal, but applicable to the first man only, of what use was it to teach this doctrine to those who lived after him, and to whom it must be a matter of indifference whether Adam obtained a living by the sweat of his face, or, as some theologians say, was created a gentleman?

According to the penalty for eating the forbidden fruit, man was to die on the *very day* he partook of it. But, so far from dying, his life was prolonged, and food to sustain it was provided for him, "to eat of it all the days of thy life"—"till thou return unto the ground."

It is said, in another part of this book, that when Adam and Eve discovered their nakedness, they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons, without informing us how they obtained the needles and the thread at a time when the working of iron, and the trade of thread-making, were unknown. We have an account, equally satisfactory, of

God making coats of skins, and clothing the first man and woman with them. But where were the skins obtained? Are we to believe that the Deity acted the part of a butcher, who killed the animals; or, that he only pulled the skins from them while they were alive? After all this, what followed? "And the Lord God said, behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good from evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever; therefore, the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Is it not evident from this passage, that it was *jealousy*, which operated the expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise. Knowing good and evil, they had become as intelligent as the Deity. All that was wanting to perfect the resemblance, was immortality. But this the gods would not permit. Having consulted together, they drove the man and woman from paradise, lest, eating of the tree of life, they should live for ever, and thus become as perfect as themselves.

If, as is stated in this same text, the knowledge of good and evil made man like the gods, where was the sin of that act which produced a change so advantageous? We cannot exempt the Deity from being a sinner, if it was culpable to acquire that knowledge, which made mankind resemble him. Again, if the immortality of Adam and his race depended on the fruit of one tree, what if Adam had not sinned? How could his posterity, when they were scattered over the face of the earth, come and gather the fruit from this one tree? or, how could the produce of this tree be sufficient for the whole human race?

As to the cherubims, which were placed as sentinels, and the flaming sword which turned every way to guard the tree of life, we can have no better idea of these, than what the poets give us of the dragons who were said to have guarded the apples of the Hesperides—a fable from which the Jewish story was evidently borrowed. Nor are we told how long this angelical guard was stationed at this post; whether until the flood swept both it and the garden away, or for a longer or a shorter period. "How much easier (says Dr. Burnet) would it have been, in a place so well watered as paradise, to have fenced the garden about with a river; which to Adam and Eve, who were as yet ignorant of the manner either of building, or conducting boats and vessels, would have been a more than sufficient obstacle."

In the history of the early periods of the Christian church, we find that many of the fathers were so scandalized at the absurdities, contradictions, and gross impieties of the Old Testament, as to reject the *literal* meaning, and to substitute an *allegorical* sense, in all cases where the narrative was irreconcilable with reason. When Celsus called the account of the creation and the fall of man an "old wife's tale," Origin replied, that "these things were spoken in a figurative sense; that Moses and the prophets wrote altogether under the obscurities of parables, enigmas, and allegories; and that the wisdom and learning of a Christian consisted in the interpretation and application of the said prophetic enigmas and parables." Origin *contra* Celsus, l. 8. Clement, of

Alexandria, to whom Origin was a disciple, had said before him, that "the whole economy of the law is typical and prophetic. Moses and the prophets write all in parables; and the symbolical and hieroglyphical philosophy is most useful and necessary for the understanding of their prophecy." Strom. l. II. c. 1—19. Tertullian taught, that "the law is spiritual and prophetic, and almost in all points figurative. The enigmas and parables of it are to be understood in another sense than that in which they were written: for our Lord himself would have us to aim at the sublime sense of the law in which he came to fulfil it." Adv. Marcion, l. II. c. 19—l. LIII. c. 5, and l. LIV. c. 19. Athanasius inculcates the same doctrine. Epist. Adv. Marcellin, sect. 27, et Fragm. p. II. St. Hilary says, that "the law is a glass, through which we behold things to come under the gospel, which is nothing else than the spiritual sense of the law of Moses, whose writings are a sealed book, that is not to be opened but by a spiritual interpretation of it." In. Pr. 119. Jerome states, that "all the scriptures of the Old Testament mystically treat of things to come under the gospel." In. Pr. l. VI. et Jeremiah.

Thus we have the whole Old Testament books converted into allegory, fable, and mystery, by the united testimony of the most celebrated fathers of the Christian church. In this they only followed the example of the pagans, whose priests, to enable them to govern mankind effectually, attached a secret, or hidden meaning, to their sacred books, which, as is the case with Christianity, none but the initiated, or those who understood the allegorical or spiritual sense, could explain. It is by pursuing this course—by fencing their unintelligible systems around with mystery, and by proscribing all explanations or interpretations of them, except by themselves, that the priests of religion have succeeded in establishing an empire in the mind, and of commanding that respect, which superstition never fails to concede to all who assume the garb of sanctity, and study to engage the attention of those who are fascinated by tales of wonder, and by pious romancing. As has been justly remarked, "historical recollections are falsified to establish the modern systems of religion. Every kind of physical representation is resorted to for the same purpose. It is sought for in monuments and emblems with which they have no connexion—even in the badges, which glory or military pride had invented. They even proceed so far as to alter the symbols and the faith of an anterior mythology, to appropriate them to this favorite belief." Strange progress of a credulity, not only easy and blind, but eager and insatiable! Is it not a subject especially deserving of the meditation of philosophers? The history of credulity is, perhaps, the most extensive, and, certainly, one of the most important branches of the moral history of the world.

The perversion of the *literal* sense of the Old Testament books, by the substitution of an *allegorical* one, and the addition to the original text of the four first chapters of Genesis, which, as I have already shown, was the work of those who had charge of the Alexandrian library, paved the way to the introduction of the oriental mythology, which has ever since been regarded as the true worship of all who have assumed the name of Christians. The principal dogmas of Christianity, founded on the story of Adam and Eve, and on the restoration of the world from the ruinous condition caused by their disobedience, carry with them so striking a re-

semblance to the Persian and Hindoo religions, that we require only to be made acquainted with them, to be convinced, that the former was ingrafted on, or originated in the latter; and that whether such a person as Jesus of Nazareth once existed or not, there was no necessity for a revelation from heaven to teach the doctrines promulgated in his name, as they were widely scattered over the earth long before the period in which he is said to have appeared. The elucidation of this resemblance, or conformity, shall be the subject of a future lecture.

Law of the land.—In order to justify a disposition, to which bigotry and fanaticism are always prone, of proscribing those who have the courage to maintain liberal principles, great anxiety is evinced by the professors of Christianity to call in the aid of the *civil* power in support of its dogmas, whenever the truth of any of them is questioned. Not content with dooming the unbeliever to everlasting punishment, they would fain wield the sword here, in order to inflict, what they term, "salutary chastisement" for not giving implicit credit to what it is impossible, even for themselves, to comprehend. We have at least one instance, in the judicial records of this country, of judges sanctioning this principle, though, if they had deliberately reflected on the subject, they could not have failed to have been convinced, that it was *unconstitutional* to interfere as to the religious opinions of any class in society. In the constitution of the United States, the palladium of American liberty, this interference is provided against in the following words, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion; or prohibition of the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for redress of grievances."

Under this clause, the deist, or even those who may not acknowledge a deity, have as much right to exercise their opinions, by speech, or by the press, as a Christian has, or as a Brahmin would have, were he to establish a temple in this country to the idol Jaggernaut. If then *Congress* is prohibited from making any law "respecting an establishment of religion" it is perfectly manifest that no inferior legislature can do so without being guilty of a violation of constitutional principles. But so far from the constitution of the state of New York recognizing the existence of such a power in its legislature, it expressly guards against it by article 38, which runs as follows: "And whereas we are required by the benevolent principles of rational liberty, not only to expel civil tyranny, but also to guard against that *spiritual oppression* and *intolerance*, where-with the *bigotry* and *ambition* of weak and wicked priests and princes have scourged mankind; this convention doth further, in the name and by the authority of the good people of this state, ordain, determine, and declare, that the *free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference*, shall hereafter be allowed within this state, to ALL MANKIND. Provided that the liberty of conscience hereby granted shall not be so construed, as to excuse *acts* of licentiousness, or justify *practices* inconsistent with the peace or safety of this state."

Nothing, therefore, can be more obvious than that it is hostile to public liberty, as guaranteed by the general constitution, as well as by the constitution of this state, to make the religious opinions of our citizens, or of foreigners, the subject of inquiry, or even of animadversion in any of our judicial courts.

But we are told, that, as in this state the persons who framed the constitution adopted the law of England, which was in operation before the revolution, and as by that law Christianity is declared to be "part and parcel of the law of the land," it falls to be so considered here, and that our judges are warranted in imitating the practice of the English courts, who fine and imprison those who deny the divine authority of the Christian religion. To this it might be a sufficient answer, that when a principle is clearly recognised in the United States constitution, it can never be affected by the *dictum* of any judicial power whatever; much less by that of a power whose decisions are applicable to one division of the Union only, and which are evidently subversive of a prominent article in the constitution exclusively belonging to that division, and under which alone he is authorized to act. But the fact is, there is no foundation whatever for the plea, that Christianity is the established law of England. The lawyers of that country, from the days of sir Mathew Hale downward, have, no doubt, acted on the principle that it was the law; but in the recent trials of Carlile and others, when called on to exhibit this law, not one of the counsel for the prosecution, nor the judges themselves, could point it out; while, on the part of the accused, it was clearly shown, that prosecution for religious opinions was an act of tyranny, originating in bigotry, and unsupported either by reason or good policy. The judge (Mathew Hale) who first broached the opinion, also maintained that *witchcraft* was an offence against law, and actually caused some harmless old women, that were accused of it before him, to be put to death! Is the *ipse dixit* of this believer in witchcraft, of this pious burner of old women, to be taken as the law? Is it on the weak authority of such a man, that prosecutions of this nature are to be sustained in this enlightened age? If he was in error as to the offence of witchcraft, which he undoubtedly was, might he not be in error also as to the offence against religion? Infidelity, as well as witchcraft, according to their general acceptance, are but words. They relate to no person or thing; and, consequently, are not such as to be within the cognizance of any court of law whatever.

Although the British government, which uniformly opposes every thing like mental improvement, disregarded these facts; and, to gratify the malignity "of weak and wicked priests," doomed the individuals prosecuted to a cruel and ruinous imprisonment, we are satisfied that so far from measures so arbitrary being approved of in this country, there is not an individual among us, whose mind is freed from bigotry, that would not pronounce their condemnation. Although it may be regretted, that the records of our judicial proceedings exhibit a case, where a citizen was dragged before our civil tribunals, and a penal sentence passed on him by the judges, for expressing his disbelief in some religious dogmas, the rapid advance of knowledge that has taken place since that intolerant decision was pronounced, precludes all idea of its being ever re-

cognised as a precedent. It can only serve as a beacon "to guard us against that spiritual oppression and intolerance, wherewith the bigotry and ambition of weak and wicked priests and princes have scourged mankind."

In the following letter, of Mr. Jefferson, addressed to Major Cartwright, will be found a clear and satisfactory exposition of the way and manner in which Christianity came to be considered "part and parcel of the law of England." It puts the question forever at rest :

From the London Nation, July 19.

The Christian Religion, part and parcel of the law of England.—Much having of late been said and written on this topic, perhaps the opinion of a learned and illustrious American (a *fac simile* of whose signature is to be seen under an elegant engraving of the Declaration of Independence, sold by Mr. Miller, of New Bridge street may not be unacceptable to the public; especially as it does not appear that the writer had any desire to be made a party to the controversy. The opinion occurs in a letter bearing date 5th June, 1824, from the celebrated Thomas Jefferson, once president of congress, to Major Cartwright, who, deeming it well calculated to throw light on the question, has favored us with a copy of the passage, as well as with an opportunity of comparing it with the original, so that we can vouch for its authenticity. Let us hear Mr. Jefferson : he says—

"I am glad to find in your book [the English Constitution, produced and illustrated] a formal contradiction, at length, of the judiciary usurpation of legislative power; for such the judges have usurped in their repeated decisions, that *Christianity is a part of the common law*. The proof of the contrary, which you have adduced, is incontrovertible : to wit, that the common law existed while the Anglo Saxons were yet pagans ; at a time when they had never yet heard the name of Christ pronounced, or knew that such a character had ever existed. But it may amuse you to show when, and by what means, they stole this law in upon us. In a case of *Quare Impedit*, in the year [1458,] book 34, Henry VI. fo. 38, a question was made how far the ecclesiastical law was to be respected in a common law court ? and Prisot, I. C., gave his opinion in these words : 'a tiel les que ils de saint eglise ont en *ancien scripture*, covient a nous a donner credence ; car ceo Commen Leys sur quels tous manners leis sont fondes. Et auxy, sir, nous sumus obliges do conustre nostre ley—Et, sir, si poit apperer or a nous que l'evesque adfait come un ordinary sera en tiel cas, adorez nous devons ceo adjuger bon, ou auterment nemy ?' &c. See G. C. Fitz, abr. qu. imp. 89. Bro. abr. qu. imp. 12. [To such laws as they have of the, *ancient writings*, it behooves us to give credence : for, it is that common law upon which all kinds of law are founded ; and, therefore, sir, are we bound to know their law of holy church, and in like manner are they obliged to know our laws. And, sir, if it should appear now to us, that the bishop had done what an ordinary ought to do in like cases, then we should adjudge it good, and not otherwise.] Finch, in his 1st book, c. 3, is the first afterwards who quotes the case, and misstates it thus, 'to such laws of the church as have warrant in *holy scripture*, our law giveth credence,' and cites Prisot ; mistranslating '*ancien scripture*' into

holy scripture ;' whereas Prisot palpably says, 'to such laws as those of holy church have in *ancient writing* it is proper for us to give credence ;' to wit, to their *ancient written laws*. This was in 1513, a century and a half after the dictum of Prisot. Wingate, in 1658, erects this false translation into a maxim of the common law, copying the words of Finch, but citing Prisot. Wingate, max. 3, and Sheppard, tit. 'Religion,' in 1675, copies the same mistranslation, quoting the Y. 13, Finch and Wingate. Hale expresses it in these words : 'Christianity is parcel of the law of England'—1 Vesetre, 293, 3 Keb. 607 ; but quotes no authority. By these echoings and reechoings from one to another, it had become so established in 1728, that in the case of the King v. Woolston, 2 Stra. 834, the court would not suffer it to be debated, whether to write against Christianity was punishable in the temporal courts at common law. Wood, therefore, 409, ventures still to vary the phrase, and says, 'that all blasphemy and profaneness are offences by the common law,' and cites 2 Stra.—then Blackstone, in 1963, iv. 59, repeats the words of Hale, that 'Christianity is part of the law of England,' citing Ventris and Strange ; and finally, Lord Mansfield, with a little qualification, in Evans's case in 1767, says, that 'the essential principles of *revealed* religion are parts of the common law ;' thus ingulfing Bible, Testament, and all into the common law, without citing any authority ; and thus we find this chain of authorities hanging, link by link, one upon another, and all ultimately on one and the same hook ; and *that*, a mistranslation of the words '*ancient scripture*,' used by Prisot. Finch quotes Prisot ; Wingate does the same ; Sheppard quotes Prisot, Finch, and Wingate ; Hale cites nobody ; the court, in Woolston's case, cites Hale ; Wood cites Woolston's case ; Blackstone quotes Woolston's case and Hale ; and Lord Mansfield, like Hale, ventures it on his own authority. Here I might defy the best read lawyer to produce another scrap of authority for this *judiciary forgery* ; and I might go on further to show how some of the Anglo Saxon priests interpolated into the text of Alfred's laws, the 20th, 21st, 22d, and 23d chapters of Exodus, and the 15th of the Acts of the Apostles, from the 23d to the 29th verses ; but this would lead my pen, and your patience, too far. What a conspiracy this, between church and state!!!"

A CARD.

As Mr. Schultz omitted to mention the circumstances before, he now informs the friends of free and impartial investigation, that his collection of "Historical Facts, &c." under the head of the "Triumph of Truth," and now publishing in the Correspondent, consists of nothing more than brief extracts from his larger and more regular, but unpublished work, entitled, "A Review of the Five Books of Moses, in which, all the 'miracles' are traced to natural, philosophical, or political causes ; and the total ignorance of that legislator concerning the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and future state of rewards and punishments, proved to be incompatible with the character of an 'inspired' writer ; with a map of Egypt, Canaan, &c."

This work will be published so soon as the public become sufficiently liberal minded to warrant the undertaking.

Mr. Schultz believes, that he is the first person who has ever attempted to unravel the mysteries of Moses, by actually showing *how* all his "miracles," or tricks, were performed. And it is now about two years since Mr. S. published in the east, as well as the west, his "Biblical Challenge to Bishop Hobart and every Clergy ; containing Mr. S.'s expose of the 'burning bush,' 'blossomed rod,' 'cause of the deluge,' &c.," without meeting a single clergyman, who dared to risk his reputation by a denial and refutation of any of them. All that the clergy have ventured to say against Mr. S. is, that he is a votary of "deism," or "atheism," when the fact is, Mr. Schultz has repeatedly stated, that he believed in the unity of God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. Mr. S. is of the same religion as the first pair of mortals were.

C. SCHULTZ.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Intolerance.—On the 7th May, 1613, several persons were arraigned in the Star Chamber, in London, on a charge of having *defamed* the earl of Northampton and six other lords of the council, by asserting that they had solicited the king to grant toleration to the catholics, but had been successfully opposed by archbishop Abbot and lord Zouch. When the lords delivered their opinions, sir Edward Coke asserted, that the conduct attributed to lord Northampton was *little short of high treason, because to advise toleration was to advise the king against the rights and dignity of his crown*: the bishop of London and the earl of Shrewsbury prayed that they might never live to see the day when toleration should be granted; and the archbishop said, he would fearlessly declare, that in such case the king would cease to be the defender, and would become the betrayer of the faith. In conclusion, *the delinquents were severally adjudged to lose one ear, to pay a large fine, and to suffer perpetual imprisonment.*—*Lingard's History of England*, vol. ix. p. 216.

The Works of John Paul Richter are almost unintelligible to any but Germans, and even to some of them. A worthy German, just before Richter's death, edited a complete edition of his works, in which one particular passage fairly puzzled him. Determined to have it explained at the source, he went to John Paul himself, and asked him what was the meaning of the mysterious passage. John Paul's reply was very German and characteristic. "My good friend," said he, "when I wrote that passage, God and I knew what it meant. It is probable that God knows still; but as for me I have totally forgotten."

Miracles.—When St. Anthony, who preached to the fishers, was performing miracles every day, the chief of his monastery spoke to him on the subject, reprehending him for being so lavish of the power of God, and prohibited him from performing any more miracles. The saint knew his duty, and promised obedience; but in coming out of the monastery, soon after, he observed a crazy plasterer throw himself down from a pinnacle of one of the towers. "Stop," said the saint to the fall-

ing body ; and the body stopped midway between the pinnacle and the earth. " I'll just step in (resumed the saint) and ask the prior to allow me to perform this one miracle more, of replacing your stupid carcass, unhurt, on the point from whence you started: if he grant permission, well and good ; if not, with a precious clatter will you come to the ground." Having obtained permission, he restored him to his former position.

It is said of Baxter the divine, that, by continual kneeling in prayer, his knees became stiff and useless ; but we hear nothing of his benevolence. Howard, on the contrary, was so fully engaged in doing good, that he had no time to pray. Anon.

In the reign of Abdallah the 3d, there was a great drought at Bagdad ; the Mahometan doctors issued a decree that the prayers of the faithful should be offered up for rain ; the drought continued ; the Jews were then permitted to add their prayers to those of the true believers, but no rain came ; as famine stared them in the face, those dogs the Christians were at length enjoined also to pray : it so happened that torrents of rain soon followed. The whole conclave, with the mufti at its head, was now as indignant at the cessation of the drought as they were before alarmed at its continuance. Some explanation was necessary, and, a holy convocation being held, the members came to the unanimous determination, that the God of their prophet was highly gratified by the prayers of the faithful, and that he had refused their request, that he might prolong the pleasure of listening to their supplications ; but that the prayers of those Christian infidels were an abomination to the Deity, and that he granted their petitions, the sooner to get rid of their loathsome importunities. Anon.

Removal.—The office of the *Correspondent* is removed to No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library, where all orders and communications are requested to be forwarded.

Printing in all its branches, also *Bookbinding*, neatly and expeditiously executed on the most reasonable terms.

The following publications may be had as above :

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

The People's Rights Reclaimed ; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath Day—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

* * Orders for books, in every department of literature, punctually attended to.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

A FUTURE STATE.

Mr. Editor—The belief in a future state of existence is so flattering to human vanity, that to question its correctness may seem like a wanton attack upon human happiness. But error can never be more beneficial to man than truth; and what is error, can, so far as man is concerned, be tested only by subjecting the proofs in relation to it to the investigations of reason. Though it be strictly and universally true, that we neither believe nor disbelieve aught, but in accordance with the dictates of reason; yet, it by no means follows that our belief is always, or even generally, right. Our reason forms true or false conclusions, according to the predominating weight of the evidence which is presented to it; and the effect of this evidence, aside from its own nature and conclusiveness, depends, in each individual, upon the texture and habits of the mind to which it is presented. Hence, that which is proof positive to the mind of one man, is hardly proof presumptive to another; and hence the endless varieties of human belief. Yet, amid all this apparent confusion and discrepancy, one position remains invariable and incontrovertible; that each believes or disbelieves in exact accordance with what, to his mind, appears to be the predominant proof. Thus, faith being the result of the convictions of reason, and those convictions depending upon the weight of evidence, it must always be material, in estimating the probable truth or falsehood of any belief, to inquire into the evidence upon which it is founded.

Let us apply these principles to test the probable correctness or incorrectness of the belief in a future existence. The available arguments in its favor, aside from *revelation*, which, for obvious reasons, we lay out of the account, are:

That it accords with our fondest hopes and wishes, and that God would never have implanted in us an aspiration so powerful and predominant, unless it were ultimately to be gratified:

That the antiquity and universality of the belief are strong circumstances in favor of its being well founded:

That the soul of man being spiritual instead of material, is necessarily imperishable:

That the dignity of man, and his importance in the scale of creation, demand for him a more extended existence than is allotted to him here; and finally,

That the doctrine of a resurrection is at least fairly inferrable, from analogy.

Such, we believe, is a summary of all the arguments which have been or can be adduced in favor of the doctrine: let us see how much they are worth.

The first argument assumes too much; and if its assumptions were granted, would prove too much. Mankind, it is true, in their rage for castle building, have built many fanciful, and some pleasant theories upon the assumed possibility or probability of a future existence. But, so they have upon the supposed perfectibility of man, upon the delusions of alchymy, and upon a thousand other "whim whams" equally unfounded. So have the Jews built, and still build, fond, but chimerical hopes upon the coming of the Messiah; and so the Christians delude themselves with the expectation of a millenium—the very year of the commencement of which has been predicted and repredicted by successive enthusiasts, from the time of the earliest Christians until the present day. Thus, too, every individual, in his progress through life, indulges in a thousand fond, but unreal, hopes and wishes. But neither the hopes of the Jew, the Christian, nor the individual, prove any thing; or, even add one grain to the probability, that what they hope will be realized. Nor is it true, as a matter of experience, that human beings generally realize their fondest or their most ardent hopes. But, if God permits to man the disappointment of his hopes and wishes concerning this world; why should those hopes which aspire beyond the grave be exempt from a similar fate? Our hopes in this life usually rest upon something which it is at least possible for us to realize; upon something which others of our race *have* grasped, and which there is, therefore, a demonstrable possibility that we *may* grasp. Such, for instance, are the hopes of fame, of wealth, or of power. We see those who have acquired power, those who have accumulated wealth, and those who have attained to honors and distinctions. This renders it at least possible that we may do so, too; for what man has done, man may do again. But, do we see any, or know of any, who have risen from the dead; any who, "in putting off this mortal, have put on immortality?" If not; then why do we hope that we may do so?

Equally unsubstantial and unconvulsive is the argument which is predicated upon the antiquity and generality of the belief in a future existence. How ancient the belief may have been, we know not; but we have sufficient evidence that, in the earlier ages at least, it was far from universal. The most enlightened of the ancient philosophers either rejected the idea altogether, or treated it, at best, as a pleasing dream. As to the mass of mankind, they, evidently, knew nothing more about it than they were taught in the fables of their poets. To the Jews, if we are to receive the testimony of their own Bible, it was, for many ages after their existence as a nation and after the formation and adoption of their system of religious faith, entirely unknown; and down to the very close of their national history and existence, it seems to have constituted a moot point in their faith.

But those who are conversant with the history of human creeds must have remarked, that this same argument of antiquity and universality has been a standing witness, regularly brought forward in support of all the absurd and exploded systems of belief, whether in religion or philoso-

phy. The same argument would prove the world to be flat, and a fixture; the same argument would establish the existence and supernatural power of witches, devils, and sorcerers; and the same argument, had it been, as luckily it has not, sufficient to prove what its adducers wished, would have erected a barrier as impassable as the grave itself, to the march of the human mind. The dust, the rust, the mould, and the cobwebs, which have for so many centuries enshrined and protected the *antique* in philosophy and physica, have been swept away by the busy and fearless hand of modern investigation: why should those which envelope religion be allowed to remain?

To be continued.

ANTIDOTE VERSUS CORRESPONDENT.

Sir—As an interested, a dispassionate inquirer after the truth or falsehood of the Christian system of theology, permit me to address a few words to you; though not indeed with the belief that I have any observations of a novel or important character to introduce on this obscure and unintelligible subject. But having from the first, with the desire of obtaining some additional aid to the weak perception with which I am gifted, supported both your paper and the one which maintains, or at least promised to maintain, against it “a constant and rigid warfare,” I hope the columns of one or the other will admit my few crude and unconnected remarks. It appears to me that no person possessing a mind of sufficient energy to think at all, can remain neutral upon the subject of religion. I must therefore admit that mine has taken a decisive stand on the chief points at issue betwixt the two belligerents. “My bane and antidote are both before me; this in a moment brings” conviction, by inviting the use of our senses—of reasonable probability where absolute certainty is beyond our reach; “but this informs me” reason is a most treacherous guide, where the subject is most contradictory and inexplicable; that the whole human family are liable to pass the countless ages of eternity in an unextinguishable lake of fire and brimstone, elements the most dreadful to our nature; and that in all probability three fourths of our number will undergo this tremendous, this horrible fate. It is in vain we are told about an unnatural sacrifice of a son by his father, whereby the latter may be, or already has been, appeased, and our dreadful fate thereby averted. Unprejudiced, unsophisticated human nature rejects the cruel, absurd, and ridiculous tale.

But granting that this revolting fable was a fact in its leading points, what does it prove? Why, that after its existence for eighteen hundred years, out of eight or nine hundred millions of human beings who now inhabit this globe, only two hundred and eleven millions have ever heard of it; and how many among that number will be saved, appears to be not yet ascertained. But it was not to expatiate on the inconsistencies of the Jewish or Christian theologies, a work which you have so triumphantly performed, and which the unrefuted pages of the *Correspondent* will prove, that I have taken up the pen, but to notice some of the miserable logic used in the *Antidote* to support a tottering cause. The conductors of that paper are constantly vociferating “give us a better system

of religion"—"let us have a new creed before you destroy the old one," &c. &c. I ask, can the mind of man conceive, could there possibly be invented a system, a creed of religion more cruel and desolating, more destructive to the happiness of mankind, than the Jewish or Christian has been? Need we in confirmation (passing over the bloodthirsty monsters mentioned in the Jewish annals) refer to the murderous tragedies performed in every kingdom of Europe by the followers of Christ? Truly such a personage, if he came at all, did indeed come, "not to bring peace but a sword."

But we shall be told "these men were not *real* Christians; they were only professors—the *name* only, and not the *spirit* of genuine Christianity was with them"—to which I reply, call the actors in these cruel scenes by what name they will, they were the *majority* of the sect; thus utterly disproving all just pretensions to any beneficial results arising to the bulk of mankind from the introduction of this dreadful creed of religion. This was indeed a sacrifice—a salvation with a vengeance! It appears to me impossible that two honest and rational men can look each other in the face and acknowledge their belief in this Arabian Nights story. But, say some *pious* Christians, filled with charity, mercy, humility, fire and brimstone, "true, the sacrifice is only for the benefit of those who believe in it, and live a moral, upright, and irreproachable life; but, as this may be done by all, it may justly be deemed a universal and glorious means of salvation." Precious reasoning indeed! throwing the wildest, most extravagant flights of Cervantes's pen into the shade: such contemptible subterfuges are surely undeserving a serious reply. All I shall ask is, how was the state of the case before this demigod appeared on earth and had himself put to death? Would not a moral and virtuous life have insured salvation at that era? or did God in his unerring *justice* consign every human being to everlasting perdition, merely because they chanced to appear on the stage of life a few years, or a few centuries before he sent his son (or a part of himself) to suffer a violent death; a death, by the bye, much less painful than many which have since been inflicted by the *meek* and *pious* followers of the cross?

It is, indeed, true, Christianity has of late lost some of its most ferocious, inhuman characteristics; but to what is this improvement owing? Not to its "divine origin, revelation, inspiration," &c., but to that universal increase of knowledge, acquired during the last two centuries, in every branch of science and the arts, improvements which the gloomy and bigotted spirit of Christianity could not prevent; but in whose march it was reluctantly compelled to join. But I find I am diverging from the line I set out to follow, and my time and your limits will probably for the present curtail my observations on some of the *sound* and *convincing* arguments used in the *Antidote*. It is impossible to take up a number of that publication without finding *quantum sufficit* of faith and folly. In their 15th No. these zealous defenders of "our holy religion" have advanced 61 reasons for being a true Christian: most of these reasons are in direct opposition to truth, and several of them are perfectly synonymous, but expressed with some trifling variation of language; the writer no doubt wishing to make the "most of a good thing." I think it is the Rev. Joseph Simpson, in his *Plea for Religion*, who, in a similar manner.

gives us some five hundred and fifty reasons for believing the son of Joseph and Mary to have been the son of God. These reasons I remember, a few years ago, first induced me seriously to examine whether a cause which required such a forced and labored vindication was not virtually unsound and fallacious. The result has been to my mind, a full conviction that it is a very awkwardly "devised fable." S.

New York, Sept. 24, 1827.

Mr. Editor—Pope Gregory IX. excommunicated Frederick II., emperor of Germany, A. D. 1237. In his second bull of excommunication are the following remarkable expressions: "*This king of plagues was even heard to say, that the whole world had been deceived by three imposters; namely, Moses, Jesus Christ, and Mahomet. He makes Jesus Christ far inferior to the other two. They (says he) supported their glory to the last: whereas, Christ was ignominiously crucified. He also maintains, that it is a folly to believe the one only God, the creator of the universe, could be born of a woman, and more especially of a virgin.*"—[Gol. Pers. cap. lxiv.] Some particulars of the history of the Guelphs and Ghibelines, the crusade against Frederick II., &c. would, I think, be instructive to the readers of the *Correspondent*; though the history of that unhappy period would horribly disgust them.

Manzel, chaplain to Henry III., king of England, was at one time holder of seven hundred ecclesiastical livings. But the pope was far richer. He exacted the revenues of all vacant benefices; the twentieth of all ecclesiastical revenues; the third of such as exceeded 100 marks annually; and the half of such as were possessed by non residents. He levied voluntary contributions on the people; claimed a right to all money got by usury, and to the goods of all intestate clergymen, &c. &c. Have clergymen of America been divested from this ambitious and avaricious disposition? What do they aim at by their popular exertions, and national associations, but influence, power, riches, honors, and domination? Let all beware of such. B.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

Mr. Editor—I heard, with much pleasure, the lecture delivered last Sunday week, at the room of the Free Press Society, on the absurdities and contradictions of the Bible. Though the speaker did ample justice to the subject, yet I am persuaded that those absurdities and contradictions might have been made still more glaringly apparent, had time permitted, and the mind of the lecturer been directed to it; I mean the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire and brimstone, rained down from heaven. I take the liberty, without meaning any disparagement to the judicious manner in which the speaker treated the subject, to supply what at most may be considered as an omission.

Within forty years, modern chemistry has discovered that our atmosphere is composed of two gases, or, in more humble language, two kinds of air, to wit, oxygen gas and nitrogen gas. Every hundred pounds of the common air, that in which we live, is composed of nitrogen, 77 lbs., oxygen, 33 lbs.—100 lbs.

Within the same period, chemists have discovered that oil of vitriol (sulphuric acid) is composed of the same oxygen gas, and sulphur, or brimstone; and that these two substances always combine and form oil of vitriol, whenever there is present a little heat and very little water or moisture. So that if fire and brimstone had rained down from heaven, as is represented, it is absolutely certain that there would have been a shower of oil of vitriol. For the atmosphere is composed in part of oxygen gas: it also contains more or less of moisture; and the fire and brimstone being supplied from above by a miracle, all the circumstances existed which would necessarily lead to the formation of the shower of oil of vitriol in question. I am not now disposed to deny that the Almighty could send down his fire and brimstone from heaven; but I understand that he *did not* do it, inasmuch as not even the writer of the Bible account tells any thing of the formation or presence of the oil vitriol, at the time of the pretended calamity that fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah: nor has any profane writer mentioned such an occurrence. The truth is, no one, at that day, could have expected such an unpleasant shower as the oil of vitriol would have been; for they did not then know how it was constituted. But now, every school of chemical science daily repeats the experiment of making sulphuric acid, from the elements I have mentioned.

On the supposition, however, that fire and brimstone did come from heaven, (and I should suppose it much more likely to have come from another place, more congenial with the being who governs there,) I have amused myself with a little calculation. On a single square mile, or rather pressing on it, by its own gravity, there is above 13,000,000,000 pounds of oxygen gas. Now, in order to make oil of vitriol, every 57 lbs. of oxygen gas requires 44 lbs. of sulphur or brimstone. If, therefore, the Almighty had been pleased to furnish the requisite quantity of brimstone, (and no doubt by all accounts he has a plentiful store of it,) the quantity of oil of vitriol that would have fallen on the surface of a single square mile, would have exceeded 23 thousand million of pounds—more than 11 thousand tons! How would the stockholders of our Chemical Bank laugh to be blessed with such a shower! This, at 6 cents per lb., would amount to 1380 millions of dollars!! Heretofore have nations prayed for rain for their harvests: but what harvest would be equal to this!

T. S.

THE QUESTIONS OF ZAPATA.

From the French of Voltaire.

The licentiate Zapata, appointed professor of theology in the university of Salamanca, presented the following questions to the junto of doctors in 1629. They were suppressed. The Spanish copy of them is to be seen in the library at Brunswick.

Most Learned Masters,

1. How must I proceed, in order to prove that the Jews, whom we cause to be burned by hundreds, were during four thousand years the favored people of God?

2. Wherefore should God, whom we cannot without the charge of blasphemy regard as unjust, have abandoned the whole earth for the sake of the little Jewish horde, and afterwards have given up this little horde for another, that was, during two hundred years, still more diminutive and contemptible?

3. For what purpose has he performed a number of incomprehensible miracles, in favor of this pitiful nation, before the period of all *authentic history*? Why has he ceased to perform such prodigies for some centuries past? and why do we, who are undoubtedly God's own people, never behold any of these mighty exhibitions?

4. If God is the God of *Abraham*, wherefore do you consign the children of *Abraham* to the flames? and when you burn them why recite their prayers even while they are consuming? What! do you, who profess to adore the book which contains their law, doom them to destruction for having followed that law?

5. How shall I reconcile the chronology of the Chinese, of the Chaldeans, of the Phœnicians, of the Egyptians, &c. with that of the Jews? and how shall I acquire sufficient ingenuity to make agree forty different ways adopted by the various commentators of computing time? Should I say God dictated the Jewish books, the reply would be, that God must certainly, then, be ignorant of chronology.

6. What species of argument must I adopt, to prove that the books of Moses were written by him in the desert? could he say with propriety, that he wrote beyond the Jordan when he never passed that river? I am afraid I shall be told that God was also ignorant of geography.

7. The book entitled Joshua, expresses that Joshua caused Deuteronomy to be engraven on some stones that were plastered over with mortar: this passage of Joshua as well as many passages of ancient authors, evidently proves that the oriental people engraved their laws and observations on bricks and stones. The Pentateuch informs us, that when the Jews were in the desert, they wanted even food and clothing; when they had neither tailors nor shoemakers, it was not very likely there were persons among them of sufficient ability to engrave a large volume. But how would so large a work engraven in mortar be preserved?

8. Which is the best method of refuting the objections of the learned, who find in the Pentateuch the names of towns which had no existence at that time, precepts for kings whom the Jews then held in abhorrence, and who did not reign over them till seven hundred years after the time of Moses; in fine, passages in which the author, who must have been much posterior to Moses, betrays himself in saying, "*The bed of Og which is seen even to this day at Ramatha. The Canaanite was then in the land.*" &c. &c. These Savans, taking their stand as it were upon the difficulties and contradictions which they impute to the Jewish chronicles, may give some little trouble to a licentiate.

9. Is the book of Genesis to be taken in a literal or in an allegorical sense? Did God in reality take out one of Adam's ribs in order to make a woman? why then is it expressly said before that he created man male and female? How could the light be created before the sun? How was the light divided from the darkness, since the latter is nothing but the privation of light? How could there have been day before the sun was

in existence? How could there be a firmament formed in the midst of the waters, when it is apparent there is no firmament at all, and that this false notion of a firmament is only an imagination of the ancient Greeks? There are persons who conjecture that Genesis was not written till after the Jews had obtained some knowledge of the erroneous philosophy of other nations, and I shall be grieved, perhaps, to hear it asserted, that God was as little versed in physics as in chronology and geography.

10. What shall I say of the garden of Eden, from which there went a river that divided itself into four branches, viz.: the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Pison which is thought to be the Phase, the Gihon which flows in Ethheopia, and consequently can be no other than the Nile, the source of which is a thousand leagues distant from that of the Euphrates? It will again be observed that God was a very indifferent geographer.

11. I wish, with all my heart, I could have tasted the fruit that grew upon the tree of knowledge: the prohibition, not to eat of it, appears to me very strange; for God having endowed man with reason, should have encouraged him to instruct himself. Did he desire to be worshipped only by a fool? I wish, also, I could have conversed with the serpent, since it possessed so much intelligence; but I should like to know in what language it spoke. That great philosopher, the emperor Julien, put this question to the great St. Cyril, who could not resolve it, but he replied to the emperor, "Tis you who are the serpent." St. Cyril, it would seem, was not very polite; but you will observe, he did not utter this piece of theological impertinence till after Julien's death. It is said in Genesis, that the serpent should eat the dust of the earth, but you know Genesis is incorrect on this point, and that the dust alone cannot nourish any being created. With regard to the Deity, who comes every day at noon to walk in the garden, and who holds a familiar conversation with Adam and Eve, as well as with the serpent, I must say all this would appear very pleasant to a fourth person. As, however, I believe you are better adapted for the company that visited Joseph and Mary in the stable, I shall not propose to you a journey to the garden of Eden, especially as the entrance is guarded by a cherubim armed from top to toe. The rabbins, it is true, acknowledge that cherubim signifies a bullock. A strange sentinel upon my word! Have the goodness to inform me, at least, what a cherubim really is.

12. How am I to explain the history of the angels who became enamored of the daughters of men, and begat giants upon them? Will it not be objected that this trait is taken from the pagan fables? As, however, we know the Jews invented all things in the desert, and that they were a very ingenious people, it is clear that all other nations are indebted to them for their knowledge. Homer, Plato, Virgil, knew nothing but what they learned of the Jews. Does not this fact admit of demonstration?

13. How shall I escape from the deluge, from the cataracts that poured through the windows of heaven that has no windows, from all the animals that arrived from Japan, Africa, America, and Australasia, and that were shut up in a great box with sufficient provision and water to last them a whole twelvemonth; to say nothing respecting that interval of time in which the earth, still too humid by its absorption of the

waters, would be incapable of producing any thing for their subsistence? Now could the little family of Noah suffice to serve out daily to all these animals their proper aliment, it being composed of only eight persons?

14. How shall I impart to the history of the tower of Babel the coloring of truth? Of course, this tower must have been higher than the pyramids of Egypt, since God permitted these pyramids to be built. Did it reach to Venus, or only to the Moon?

15. By what art shall I justify the two downright lies uttered by Abraham, the father of the faithful, who, at the age of one hundred and thirty-five years, made the beautiful Sarah to pass for his sister in Egypt and at Kadesh, so that the kings of these same countries became enamored of her and made her many presents? O ye! how base a thing to sell one's wife!

16. Furnish me with some reasons that shall explain why, God having given his commands to Abraham that all his posterity should be circumcised, the people under Moses were not subjected to this operation?

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible.

By the Secretary.

LECTURE SEVENTH.

In a former lecture, I directed your attention to the deplorable condition of the Jews, during the period they are stated, in Bible history, to have been under the government of Moses, of judges, of kings, and of prophets, who alternately ruled them with a rod of iron, and, the more certainly to perpetuate that rule, studiously withheld from them all useful knowledge, and discouraged every thing like intercourse with their learned and intelligent neighbors. These they were taught to regard as barbarians, proscribed by heaven, and utterly destitute of every good quality. This degraded condition, to which the "chosen people of Jehovah" were reduced by the priesthood, is not only apparent from their own sacred books; but the fact is placed beyond all dispute by the admissions of their historian Josephus, who says, that his people were regarded by surrounding nations as the "most trifling of all the barbarians;" a charge which the author of "Jewish Antiquities," so far from attempting to invalidate, unreservedly admits, but endeavors to excuse, on the ground that the Jews confined themselves entirely to agriculture and commerce, and paid no attention to the cultivation of science or of literature. It was in this state of mental depravity, and unsocial feeling towards the enlightened nations who had then established themselves on the earth, that the unprincipled and outrageous proceedings of the Jews roused the indignation of the rulers of these nations, and ultimately led to the long captivity in Babylon. It was here, and while in close intercourse for seventy years with the inhabitants of this extensive country, the habits and opinions of the captives became so entirely changed, that they lost all re-

collection of their own language, and religious observances, and imbibed the mythological dogmas of the Persians, the disciples of Zoroaster, and of the Hindoos who were of the religion of Brahma. It was thus that the first professors of the Christian religion, who were all Jews, acquired a knowledge of the oriental systems of religion, and from these manufactured a new code, which afterwards, through the influence of an emperor, became the established faith, and is at this day professed as the only true religion, by those calling themselves the most civilized and the most intelligent people on the globe.

The fact, which I have more than once alluded to, of the legend of Adam and Eve, contained in the first four chapters of Genesis, having been prefixed to that book after Christianity had been broached, or contemplated, strongly confirms the truth of the statement that the Jews had no idea of the system taught in these four books previous to the long captivity. This fact is farther confirmed when it is considered, that no part of the story is alluded to in any of the after writings attributed to Moses. We do not find, in the subsequent parts of the five books, a single word about the creation of the world, the fall of man, the introduction of original sin, through the superior power or influence of an evil spirit, the existence of a hell and a heaven, nor of a mediator who was to deliver mankind from the consequences of the transgression of the first man. These alleged truths, so important to the happiness of the human race; without which all must be damned, although said to be clearly and distinctly pointed out in Genesis, and although forming the basis of that "only true religion announCED by Deity," are not referred to, in the most distant manner, in the multifarious code of laws, commandments, and ordinances, which the Jewish legislator is said to have given to his people. Does not this circumstance demonstrate, that Moses was unacquainted with the doctrines which, Christians tell us, are so plainly inculcated in the beginning of the Pentateuch? And, is it not equally conclusive, that this part of the five books was generally, if not universally, received as true, by several nations. If, then, the Jews, as is evident, knew nothing before their captivity of these doctrines, and only began to notice them in their writings after their restoration, it is obvious, that they must have learnt them from those with whom they lived captives. All doubt as to this will vanish, when we attend to the striking conformity that exists between the Christian religion, and the religion of the Persians and Brahmins.

Pliny and Aristotle concur in placing the existence of Zoroaster, the Persian lawgiver, from 6 to 7000 years before the Christian era. Some have disputed this; but none have pretended to date the time of his appearance later than 5 or 600 years before the birth of Jesus. This, then, is sufficient to show, that the opinions which Zoroaster taught the Persians could not be borrowed from the Christians. Now, in the Persian scripture, called the *Zendavesta*, we have the precise same account of the formation of man that we have in Genesis, even to the names used in that book. The Christians believe in one supreme, eternal, self-existent being, the creator of all things. In the Persian sacred book he is described as "the first, incorruptible, eternal, unbegotten, indivisible being; the charioteer of things good; the wisest of the wise; the father of equi-

ty and justice; self taught, naturally perfect, and wise; and the sole inventor of sacred Nature."

Christianity inculcates the belief in a soul, and in a future state of rewards and punishments. Zoroaster taught the same doctrines. He also assigned the same number of periods for the creation of the world that is done in Genesis; with this difference, that in the latter book, six *days* are mentioned, whereas in the Persian scripture six *gahans* or periods are spoken of—the whole comprehending 365 days. In the first period God formed the heavens; in the second, the seas and all the water; in the third, the earth; on the fourth, trees, shrubs, and vegetables; on the fifth, beasts, birds, and fishes; and on the sixth, he created man, his last, fairest, and best work, to whom he gave the name of Adam. The god of darkness called *Ahrimanus*, assuming the form of a serpent, having visited the earth, became envious of the happy condition of man, and tempted him to disobedience, by which the human race became corrupt and ungodly; to punish which the Good Spirit, called by the Persians, Ormuzd, or the God of Light, destroyed the world by a great flood, but afterwards restored it to its pristine beauty.

Like the Christians, the priests of Zoroaster, who were called magi, inculcated the doctrine, that God the Father perfected all things and delivered them over to the Son, or second mind; which they named Mithras, *mediator*, the second in power to God. "He is," say they, "Light begotten by the Father." Heaven, they call "the beams of Light, and the immortality of the Father." Of hell, they say, "Stoop not down to the dark world, beneath which constantly lies a faithless depth, or *Hades*, dark all over, precipitous, craggy, and deep."

"One important point in the theology of the Persees was the introduction of an intermediate being as mediator between *Ormuzd*, the God of Light, and *Ahrimanus*, the God of Darkness, by whose intercession the sins of mankind were to be wiped away, and happiness placed in the reach of all who chose to embrace it by subscribing to the doctrines promulgated by the Saviour, whose name, as before mentioned, was Mithras. He was said to have always, from all eternity, existed in heaven; and when he was sent on earth he was a preacher of truth and excellence, following a life of the most spotless character and integrity, performing innumerable miracles by giving health to sick men and to animals; thereby clearly proving the divine nature of his mission. The disciples of Mithras were enjoined to be meek, patient of injuries, of a mild and forgiving temper, and to give the greatest testimony of sanctity; to be void of all earthly passions, and to have their minds fixed on heavenly things alone; to keep themselves pure and undefiled, and to dedicate their lives to his service. All solemn oaths and assertions were taken in the name of Mithras, and which were deemed impious and dishonorable to depart from. The priests of this religion were empowered to grant *licenses for marriage*, and none other were valid and legal but such as had been solemnized by their means. One of the doctrines of this mode of worship was the *baptism of new born infants*, thereby making them inheritors of heaven, through the mediation of Mithras, whose servants they then became. At the age of seven years, *confirmation* succeeded this rite, when the child promised to be in reality what had been under-

taken for him in his infancy. Extreme unction and auricular confession (as now observed among the catholics) were enjoined and practised by the priesthood. The hierarchy, or sacred government of heaven, was composed of angels of different grades, divided into archangels, cherubim and seraphim; and the duration of the world was estimated to be at an end at the expiration of six thousand years, when the *Lamb*, who sat on the right hand of God, should come in great glory upon earth, and conduct his followers and disciples to the new world of harmony and happiness."

The resemblance which this account of the character, maxims, and conduct of Mithras, the mediator of the Persians, to Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour, or mediator of the Christians, is so apparent, that no rational man can mistake it, or hesitate a moment in pronouncing the latter to be a counterpart of the former.

The Brahman system of religion has been clearly traced to a period of between 5 and 600 years beyond the commencement of the Christian era. His mythology acknowledged one supreme being, who "formed all things by the word of his mouth." This being is said to have created a female deity, who brought forth three eggs, from which sprung three male deities, *Brahma*, *Vichnou* or *Christna*, and *Chiven*. *Brahma* created our present world; *Chiven*, who possessed a wicked and envious disposition, destroyed its harmony and beauty. The power of defeating and expelling evil, and of cherishing and preserving good, was given to *Christna*. This conjunction of deities constituted the Brahmanical trinity.

To be continued.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Massacre of St. Bartholomew.—During the religious and political contests which took place so frequently in the early part of the sway of the Capetian dynasty, Paris was often the scene of outrage and assassination. It was in Paris that the most wanton and bloody massacre ever perpetrated was committed, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, of which there is a well written and circumstantial account in these volumes. During this dreadful scene the city, says the historian, De Thou, was nothing but a scene of horror and carnage; all the *places* and streets resounded with the shouts of madmen, who had given themselves up to slaughter and pillage; from every quarter the shrieks of the wounded and dying met the ear. Wherever the eye turned, it fixed upon dead bodies thrown out of the windows; the chambers and the courts were filled with the slain, whose corpses were dragged through the kennels. In the streets the tide of blood was so great, that it flowed in torrents: in short, there was an innumerable multitude of persons massacred, men, women, and children. Another cotemporary writer speaks of this day as follows: "Sunday (August 24) was employed in murder, violation, and pillage. The streets were covered with dead bodies, the river was dyed with blood, the gates and entrances of the king's palace were stained with gore. The paper would weep were I to recite the horrible blasphemies uttered by these

robusters, these incarnate devils. The uproar, the continual report of muskets and pistols, the lamentable and terrifying cries of the tormented, the shouts of the murderers, the bodies cast out of the windows, and the stacking of more than six hundred houses, may present to the reader's mind the picture of these excesses, and the diversity of the miseries and crimes. The commissaries, captains, *quarteniers*, and *dizeniers*, of Paris, went, with their subalterns, from house to house, wherever they thought Huguenots might be found; forced the doors, and then cruelly massacred all who fell into their hands, without regard to sex or age, being encouraged in their work by the dukes d'Anmale, de Guise, and de Nevers, who ran about the streets, crying, 'Kill, kill every one! the king commands it!' Waggon loads of the dead bodies of men, women, and children were thrown into the river. The court of the Louvre and different parts of the city streamed with blood."

These were not the acts of insurgents throwing off their allegiance. Oh, no; the murders were committed by the command of the fiend like king Charles IX., at the instigation of his more fiendish mother, Catharine de Medici, and was to them a feast, which they witnessed with transports of joy. The king even assisted in the massacre.

Martyr (a blessed).—A perjured prince, who violated his coronation oath; governed without a parliament; imprisoned his subjects for refusing to lend him money; instituted false, malignant, villainous prosecutions against deserving individuals; reduced his people to the necessity of taking up arms in their own defence; and by his scandalous dissimulation, when about to be restored to power, left it utterly impossible to confide in his honor, his humanity, or his oath, but drove the principal men of the adverse party, in their own defence, to sit in trial upon, and put him to death. Truly, a very "*blessed martyr*."

Ignorance.—Here is the true source of every calamity, famine, slavery, and oppression. It is *ignorance* that nerves the arm of the tyrant, sharpens the desolating sword of war, builds the altar of superstition, lights the torch of bigotry, and spreads want and famine through the land. All those evils flow from ignorance; because swinish, sottish ignorance creates or tolerates them.

Effects of Devotion.—The death of Stanislaus, king of Poland, was occasioned in a singular manner. Being much addicted to smoking, he generally every day finished many pipes. In knocking out the ashes he set fire to his dressing gown. As no one was near him, the flames had surrounded him, when the officer on guard, hearing his cries, ran to his assistance, and extinguished the fire. He might have survived, but a singular circumstance accompanied the accident. He had been devout during the last years of his life, and, as a penance for his sins, had worn a girdle with points on the inside; these became heated, and being pressed into his body while the flames were extinguishing, caused a number of wounds, the discharge from which, at his period of life, proved too much for his debilitated constitution.

The Good Old Times.—All that is left on record of the feudal days of Italy which preceded her republics, presents the most terrific aspect of a disorganized society. The people were slaves, brutal in intellect and habits; the upper ranks lived in continual warfare with each other; and princes and popes, regulars and seculars, are found stabbing, strangling, blinding, and torturing each other in the short pauses of open warfare. The horrible murders committed in the family of the emperor Maurice, by the emperor Phocas, were alluded to with approbation by Gregory the Seventh, who (say impartial historians) talked of "*i felicissimi tempi del regno di Foca.*" Numbers of the early popes, like the sultans, succeeded by assassinating their predecessors. Benedict the Sixth was strangled by his successor. The assassinations of Benedict the Ninth procured his abdication. The crimes committed in convents are frankly related by the Italian historians of past and present times—the Muratori and the Pignotti. A young abbot having the eyes of four of his monks trodden out for resisting his despotism, is one among a thousand anecdotes of monastic atrocities. Mean time, feudal princes in France and Italy were committing every species of violence: living by pleasures, and reigning by murders, they sold their prisoners of war as slaves. There was no written law; the ordeal, called in Italy *Giudizio di Dio*, was the only test of innocence; and the accused princess, who could not suffer boiling or burning with patience, was declared guilty, and condemned to death. The work of blood went on with such unceasing activity, that, to prevent a total depopulation, the *Tregua di Dio* was instituted, which interdicted all combats from Thursday to Monday. This was the result of that ignorance, still protected by the modern representatives of the feudal princes of those good old times.

State of Learning.—A layman who should pretend to read was stigmatized as a pedagogue, and regarded as unworthy even to look upon a sword. Kings made a sign of the cross to treaties drawn up by monks; because they could not write. In the ninth century, the count Palatine, the supreme judge of the empire, could not sign his name; and the orthography of the feudal nobles of France was a subject of public jest down to the time of the gallant Richelieu, whose love letters kept the lawyers in a court of justice "in a roar." Even the inferior clergy were kept in profound ignorance; and Gregory the Second complains by his legates, that such was the ignorance of the Ecumenic Council, that not only letters, but the scriptures, were unknown to its members. The dog Latin of pope Adrian the Second, and his secretary, has been the derision of the learned in all times, (see Mabillon.) So far back as the 6th century, open war was declared against enlightening the minds of the laity; and pope Zachariah, urged by the bishop of Magenza, stripped a friar, of the name of Virgilio, of his gown, for having insisted upon the doctrine of the antipodes, which, though maintained by Cicero and Macrobius, was condemned by St. Augustine as blasphemous and heretical. The people were ordered, on the penalty of incarceration and fines, to disbelieve the doctrine of the antipodes; and they very religiously obeyed. Such are the times whose institutes are to be revered to complete the social order of the present day.

Popular Religions.—All usurers have adopted popular religions, or religions which promised to become so. Constantine made it the lever of his political ambition. Thus did the Clouises, the Pepins, and the Charlemagnes. The penal codes of William and Anne against their catholic subjects, the sudden conversion of Henry the Fourth, and the protection of the church by Bonaparte, had nothing to do with religion; all alike followed in the beaten track of a policy, now worn out; while in fact, each found, like the Argente of Tasso,

His law and his reason in his sword.

The rest was but political conformity to popular opinion.

A Bull!—The church of St. Giovanni Evangelista is one of the finest in Parma. In one of its chapels (the chapel of the Four Virgins) there is a charming picture of St. Lucia, looking at her own eyes, which swim like gold fish, in a crystal vase that she holds in her beautiful hands. St. Lucia was, probably, an Irish saint! At all events, her eyes must have been very naughty eyes, to have required their being pulled out for the good of her soul!

An Italian Sermon.—While at Bologna, we were taken to hear the celebrated preacher, the *Canonico****; and his sermon, both for its manner and matter, was extremely curious. Like all Italian preachers, he had a *conventional* style and gesticulation; he commenced each phrase with a sort of whining chant—then suddenly dropping his declamatory tone, he adopted a familiar, gossiping manner, the most humorous and effective that can be imagined, alternately twirling his cap, taking it off, or putting it on, or appealing to the crucifix, which is always affixed to the side of the pulpits in Italy. His subject was "CHARITY.—"Charity (he said) is the love of your neighbor—I say, (he continued, emphasizing the word) in the homely expression and homely sense of the scriptures, meaning literally your neighbor, whom you should love through Christ, (the church,) and not in the vague sense of modern philosophy, which talks of humanity and philanthropy, and such jargon; but this sort of charity, my dear Christians, is a mantle, made not only to cover your own sins, but the sins of your neighbor." Here he paused, and shook a little tin box, on which a friar went about collecting, and the preacher proceeded: "Charity is silent on a neighbor's frailties. It does not, like philosophy, attach vices to a class, for the charity of modern philosophy is to exclaim against Holy Mother Church. With these philosophers (*i monachi sono furfanti, i Preti birbanti*) monks are rogues, and priests robbers." Here he fixed his eyes on some young men, and at his familiar question of "What think ye, my Christians?" there was a general titter. Then putting on his cap, after a long pause, he opened another exordium in the usual nasal whine, which he concluded by saying, "Charity, my Christians, bids you open your mantle wide, so—and close it upon the sinner, so—(here he most gracefully imitated the act with his own robe,) for, the sum of charity is to GIVE and to FORGIVE." Here he again rattled his box, and his coadjutor once more resumed his office, and collected from the congregation. He preached, as they all do

in Italy, extempore; and after a short pause, resumed his sermon apparently at the entrance of fresh auditors, who seemed to change every twenty minutes, and to come in, and go out, as a thing of course.

Morality of the Georgians.—This wild people have a curious reason for indulgence in robbery. They pretend, that, after God had created the world, he published a decree, by which all people were summoned to take possession of their several portions: the whole of mankind had a share, except the inhabitants of Caucasus, who were forgotten. Upon putting in their claim, which the Deity acknowledged to be just, he permitted them to live at the expense of their neighbors; and most assuredly they reap ample profits upon presumption of the license.

The most ridiculous of all animals is a proud priest: he cannot use his own tools without cutting his own fingers. *Lacon.*

We should justly ridicule a general, who, just before an action, should suddenly disarm his men, and, putting into the hands of each of them a Bible, should order them thus equipped to march against the enemy. Here we plainly see the folly of calling in the Bible to support the sword; but is it not as great a folly to call in the sword to support the Bible? Where we combat error with any other weapon than argument, we err more than those whom we attack. *Lacon.*

When men can once be made to believe the necessity of a mediator between God and them, it is not difficult to persuade them of the necessity of other intermediate mediators. *Anon.*

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ON PRAYER.

Mr. Editor—There is no trick of the church so contradictory in itself, and, at the same time, so specious and profitable, as that of prayer. The analysis of one, on rational principles, cannot but show its discordances. The enumeration, to an omniscient God, of the events that have transpired, and of benefits received, as though to renew his recollection of them; the repetition of grateful protestations, and of high drawn pictures of his power and good qualities, and other flattering methods, to an omnipotent God, as though he was dependant on man for any source of happiness, or could be cajoled into his wishes; to an all wise God, the pointing out of what is thought best, and much wanted, as though he required to be taught the best way to regulate affairs, and could be made to alter his intentions to suit every upstart that chooses to prostrate himself, as he says, standing, at the footstool of the throne of an immaterial God, who consequently cannot need whereon to set or put his feet; the pride of humility with which all the most atrocious conduct, called sins, is attributed to himself by the petitioner, which, if less than one half were attributed to him by a fellow man, would lead to quarrels, hatred, and perhaps bloodshed, as though that God would, in the mildness of his mercy, forget and forgive his offences, who could not forget or forgive the offence of an ignorant man and woman 5000 years ago, even after his only son had sacrificed his life for it.

But these prayers afford excellent opportunities for oblique, cautious surmises; hints and inuendoes, political and theological. I have heard a grey headed divine, at a time of great political contention, in praying for the president of these United States, beg his God "mercifully to change his mind or gently remove him by death." I have heard all manner of sly hints and party arguments to operate upon the minds of the the people; the most malicious assertions, and the strongest effusions of passion, and rancorous hatred, poured out by these meek and humble servants of the Lord, before his throne, and in what is called his presence. It is required, also, to come up before the Lord to join in prayer; before that God, too, who is said to be omnipresent, and therefore could hear a man as well in his closet as at St. Paul's or St. Peter's. But after all is done, and many protestations of submission to divine will, a *cante blanche* is given to God of "thy will, and not mine, be done." [Now, why would not this come in as well at the beginning, and save all the other waste of words?]

Is it thought to cajole the Almighty by the many forms of flattery made use of? Is it imagined that he is not aware of what is going on in the world? Is it believed that his happiness is any ways increased by these outpourings of the spirit? If so, then he is a being dependant on inferior beings; and it would seem so, as this is all done to *please* him, and to employ means to convey happiness. If, then, the sum of his happiness is thus increased, there is so much deficiency if our praise is withheld; and on our actions here on earth depends the happiness of him who has the happiness of heaven at control. It is said "the Lord is angry with sinners every day." Now, sin is continually going on; some say there is more of it than of good. Anger implies unhappiness, for no one will allow that an angry being can be any ways happy. Upon the actions of these sinners, then, instigated and influenced by the devil, depends the happiness of the Almighty; therefore, the happiness of God is very much in the power of his old enemy Satan, who, notwithstanding he is cast out and confined in chains, going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, has in his hands the happiness of the ruler of the universe. But, perhaps, this is all counterbalanced by the occasional repentance of sinners, as it is said "there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than of ninety and nine just persons;" whence it appears that the influence of sinners is immense in heaven, and, probably, that part of the day which is not disturbed by anger occasioned by the evil deeds of sinners, is made happy by the repentance of one sinner at least every day.

I have lately met with the prayer put into the mouth of a Yorkshire shepherd. The whole being too long to transcribe, I will give some extracts from it, as it places the subject in a good light. It begins,

"O Lord, it's but seldom that I come hurklin afore you to tire you with any poor petitions of mine; for I have been often uplifted about what you gave me to complain of; and when ye were pleased to take aught from me, I held my tongue. I have always counted myself unworthy to be heard by such a good being; therefore, I did not like to come yammerin and whining afore ye every hour of the day for this thing and the tother thing. Ye know well yourself it was out of no disrespect, but I tho't it very selfishlike to be higgles hagglin a hale lifetime for favors to a poor frail worm, and from one who knows all my wants so well, and whom I never yet distrusted. But the time is come to expostulate with you," &c. He then enumerates his wealth and wife and sons, and then his only daughter. "And now thou art threatening to take this precious gift, in the very May flower of life. Is this like the doing of a father and friend? And I were to give my son Joseph a bony ewe lamb, the flower of the flock—how would it look in me afterward if I were to go over the hill and hunt the dogs on it, and then take it myself? What would my son Joseph say of that? I think he would have reason to complain, and I should be loath to do it. It is as much as all our reasons and lives are worth, and my weak sight can see no fatherly hand in such an act. If thou canst not stock heaven with brighter and beauteous spirits otherwise than at the expense of breaking parents' hearts, it strikes me thou hast a dear pennyworth. I know thou wilt do all for the best in the long run; but the feelings thou hast given deserve some commiseration for the present. Mine's a case of great dread and anxiety, and admits of no

standing on stepping stones. There's nothing but splashing through thick and thin. If thou hast indeed revealed to her spirit the secret of her dissolution, I will not insist upon your breaking your word; for I know you are neither a Yorkshire woman, nor a Galloway drover, to be saying one thing the day and another the morrow. But I would fain hope it is only a warning given in kindness to lead to repentance, and that ye intend making a Nineveh job of it after all. We must now, at no more than five days after date, draw on thy bounty, conjunctly and severally, for value received, although we must confess the ransom paid by another, not by us. O Lord! have mercy on us, kneeling before thee on the earth, *the crumb cloth before thy throne*; grant us a remission of our manifold sins. Into these mysteries of man's salvation I dare not so much as peep through the barrel hole of modern devices. We can never dread, nor think, nor dream of aught harsh or severe coming from the beneficent hand that made us—that has preserved us so long—and made us so happy with one another. Woe be to the capitious tongue that would represent thee as standing on flaws and punctilios with the creatures of thy hand, even the nineteenth part of a straw's balance, when it is evident to all Nature, that, since the day thou created them, thou never had a thought in thy head that had not the improvement of the breed, both in virtue and happiness, in view."

This, I think, contains rather more sense than those generally offered by the priests, and may afford them a model. I intended to offer some further remarks on another mode of addressing God—psalm and hymn singing; but, as this will take up sufficient room at present, I must postpone it to another opportunity.

CELSUS.

A FUTURE STATE.

Continued from page 163.

But we are told that the soul of man, being spiritual instead of material, is necessarily imperishable. Now, this is assuming one fact to prove by it another; while the very fact assumed needs proof, at least as much as the point does which it is adduced to prove. It is like proving this, that, and the other thing, from the authority of the Bible; without first proving the Bible to possess, or to be, any authority. These very modest reasoners only ask you, like Archimides, for "a place to set their pivot," and they will construct you a lever to move the world. But who has seen, or who can define a spirit? Who knows its qualities and capacities; and who can tell why it should be more perdurable than matter? It seems demonstrated by the discoveries and investigation of modern science, that there is no known process, either of art or Nature, by which matter is, or can be, destroyed. Its accidental qualities may be changed, and are, indeed, almost continually changing; but its essential properties remain the same. When we have thus much of proof respecting the durability of matter, and when we have not the least evidence of even the existence of such a thing as spirit, there would seem to be neither room nor reason for giving any weight, or any further consideration, to this argument.

When, however, reason fails to establish the dogma, our feelings and passions are called to its aid, and our vanity is enlisted under its banners, through the flattering unction of our dignity and importance in the scale of existence. *Æsop* tells of a certain frog, who burst in attempting to swell himself to the size of the ox. We leave the application of the fable to the judgment of the reader; after he has for a moment descended with us from the stilts on which fancy has mounted him, and looked calmly and philosophically at man's intrinsic value and relative dignity in the scale of creation.

Man, in intellectual excellence, stands at the head of all the created intelligence which is located on this earth; he sees no being with endowments or capacities superior to his own. But he sees, in himself and every thing around him, the works of a being so indefinitely superior to himself in all those qualities which he conceives to belong to, or to denote intellectual excellence, that, for the want of a standard by which to measure or define the limits of those qualities, he at once pronounces that being to be infinite. But though this word, *infinite*, in reality expresses nothing, save man's utter inability to define or limit that to which he applies it; yet it proves that there is, in the universe, at least one intellect immeasurably superior to man's: and, if so, it shows, also, that there may be, and possibly is, a graduated scale of created intellectual excellence, extending upwards from man indefinitely, and filling at least a portion of that amazing distance on the mental scale which, though we cannot measure, we know must and does exist between man and God. From man downward, we can perceive a very regular chain of intellectual existence; and we can trace it, as it were, link by link, down at least to the oyster, and, as many suppose, even into the vegetable creation. The links which are above us we do not see; but will this warrant us in the conclusion that they do not exist? That other worlds than ours exist—worlds, compared with the sum total of which ours is but as a drop of water to the ocean, we have the most satisfactory evidence. Are these worlds unpeopled? If not, then are they peopled by those who are above, or below, or like us, in the intellectual scale? Why, when we set no limits to God's power, and when we see that he has exerted that power indefinitely in the creation of worlds; why, we ask, is God to stop, in his *intellectual* creation, at so humble a point as that which is occupied by man? But if he has not; if there are, indeed, at this moment, in other worlds and in other spheres, a series of created beings which compose, indefinitely, the links of the intellectual chain from man upward, as we see and know that there is from man downward, then we should be glad to know why man's relative importance in the scale entitles him to an endless existence, when the very next links below him are not even imagined to endure longer than they are visible here.

But, as a last resort, we are cited to arguments founded in supposed analogies, and told that the doctrine of a resurrection finds corroboration there. We are aware that some very clear and powerful minds (and, among others, that of the late Mr. Paine) have been apparently satisfied with arguments drawn from this source. But no man's belief is a guide for us. We want the convictions of reason; and those convictions have never resulted to our minds from these pretended analogies. The most

prominent reason why we have hitherto lacked conviction is, that the analogies which we have had the fortune to see adduced on this subject are, in truth, not analogous. So far as we are informed, those relied on are, the germination of seed sown in the earth; the repeated reproductions of a perfect animal from the sections of a polypus; and the revivifications of flies, and some other insects and animals, after they have been long apparently dead.

The first is an argument ascribed to St. Paul, as a proof and illustration of the resurrection of the body. It is to be found in 1st Corinthians, ch. 15, from the 34th to the 46th verses; and, to those who will examine it philosophically, we are willing to leave it for what it is worth. The argument, such as it is, is based on a false assumption—that the death of the old seed produces the new crop. But this is not true in point of fact. The old seed does not die. If it does, your new crop is gone. Kill the germ, and the seed will never vegetate. This is well known and familiar to every planter, and, we should suppose, to every one else at the present day. The apostle, then, is not borne out by the facts, when he says, “thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.” But if this consideration were not fatal to the analogy; and, of course, to the inference, there is another which is, viz., that the grain we reap, although of the same species, is not the same grain which we sowed. The identity is gone: and it might as well be pretended that a man continues to exist in his offspring, and is, for that reason, immortal, as that the vegetation of seed furnishes an argument corroborative of his future existence. The species is, indeed, in both cases, continued; but the individual is lost.

To be continued.

BIBLE ABSURDITIES.

Mr. Editor—Should we take up the history of the American continent, which history was without date or signature, and, in the course of our reading, find it stated that steamboats run from New York to Albany daily, would we suppose the historian to be a contemporary with our puritan fathers, or to have written the history any time previous to the invention of steamboats? Every body will agree with me that it is impossible. Let this argument hold good in all similar cases.

We read (see Abernethy's Compend of General History, page 59) that glass was first invented by Bonalt, a monk, in England, A. D. 664. Now, if we find a history that speaks of glass being used, may we not say that that history must have been written since the invention of glass? We find a lookingglass mentioned, Exodus, 38th c., 8th v. See, also, Isah. 3d c., 23d v.—1st Cor., 13th c., 12th v.—2d Cor., 3d c., 18th v.—James, 1st c., 23d v.—Rev. 4th c., 6th v., and 21st c., 18th v. We find by the same author quoted above, (page 53,) that beds were first invented by bishop Paulinus, of Nola, in Campagna, A. D. 400: yet we read of beds in Exodus, 28th c., 33d and 34th v., and 39th c., 25th and 26th v., and Jeremiah, 14th c., 20th v. May we not be allowed to say, that these writings must have been written after that glass and beds were invented?

There is something said concerning the temple or house of God, which evidently serves to place the origin of some of the early writers of scripture posterior to building the temple. This temple, the scripture says, was built by Solomon, and completed in the eleventh year of his reign: yet mention is made of the house of God in Joshua, 9th c., 23d v., where Joshua told the Gibeonites that they should not be freed from being bondmen, but should be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of God. See Judges, 19th c., 18th v., A certain Levite going to the house of the Lord, and 20th c., 31st v., And the men of Benjamin began to smite and kill as at other times in the highways, of which one goeth up to the house of God. David says of Ahithophel, We walked into the house of God in company: again, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of God. Should any say God had other houses before the temple was built, let him read 2d Samuel, 7th c., 6th v., where God says, I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. The foregoing observations are submitted for consideration.

As I have a little room left on this sheet, I will insert a few more observations that are designed to show the inconsistency and absurdity of the Bible. We are told, Gen., 34th c., that the two sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, fell upon a walled city, with sword in hand, and slew all the males, and took the women and children captives, and all the spoil, and this when, according to the scripture, they were neither of them six years old.

We read, Deut., 27th c., 26th v., that cursed is he that confirmeth not all the words of this law, (of Moses.) We read, too, that he which breaks one of these least commands, and teach men so to do, shall be accounted least in the kingdom of heaven; and he that fails in one point is guilty of all. We see it said of Christ, that he came not to destroy but to fulfil the law; and, again, it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than one tittle of the law should fail. Yet, at other times, we see him teaching, that the precepts of the law are not good, and substituting others in their stead. In the 10th c. of Mark, we read of the Pharisees asking Jesus, if it's lawful for a man to put away his wife. He answers, what does Moses say? Moses says, give her a bill and put her away. Jesus adds, for the hardness of your hearts he wrote you this precept, but from the beginning it was not so; and tells them not to put away their wives but for one cause only. In these remarks we see the inconsistency and instability of Jesus. We see, too, what a fine character he gives Moses; and we see that the law of God, which curses for the least transgression, is suited to the hardest of hard hearts—the Jews.

I wish to inform the editor of the *Antidote*, that I have had the perusal of all the numbers of that paper, and have noticed the finger of contempt they have pointed at me in their 12th number; but, as they are not the first that has pointed it, and as I am not the only one that is pointed at, and as it is not an uncommon thing for the Christian to persecute and scandalize those that think different from them, I shall regard it as an evil peculiar to their religion, and say no more.

G.

MR. SCHULTZ'S FACTS.

Sir—As Mr. Shultz's "facts" have attracted considerable attention, permit me through the medium of your publication to state to that gentleman two or three *notorious facts*, which appear to have escaped his observation, and respectfully to request from him a solution of their apparent inconsistency.

It is a fact, that every one who can read and understand the English language must conclude Mr. Shultz to be a disbeliever in the authenticity of the Pentateuch, and of the supernatural or divine origin of Christianity: in proof of this I might, I doubt not, bring forward fifty of his *facts*, but one or two will be amply sufficient: in his 28th he says, "the firmaments mentioned by Moses have the most absurd and contradictory definitions ever used by any mortal, and bear incontestible evidence that such random guesses never could proceed from any God;" in his 41st, "Moses frequently relates the same story twice, but never twice alike; and that is an infallible sign of a dealer in fiction;" and, in his 46th, we are told, "Moses and Aaron were too much interested to be received as impartial witnesses. You may as well expect to find our priests acknowledge themselves hypocrites."

It is a fact, that Mr. Shultz cannot prove, (as he says in No. 171,) "that God never performed more than one miracle, and that one the miracle of creation, in one second of time." By this assertion he of course denies his belief in atheism, or the eternity of matter; but I would ask him where does he receive the subject matter, the basis of this *fact* from?

It is a fact, that Mr. Shultz cannot produce (at least, he does not) any other authority than that of the comrades or followers of Christ, in support of the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, his firm belief in which he acknowledges in No. 10 of the Correspondent.

That Mr. Shultz is no infidel—that he is a strong believer in *some* system or other I have no doubt, though I confess my inability to discover what that system is. I must even say his writings appear to me to bear some affinity, in principle, with the language of the old lady, who, hearing of the capture of Burgoyne, observed, with much earnestness, "Is he taken, and all his men?—I am glad of it," and, in the next breath, inquired, "Which side was he fighting for?"

After having refused credence to the Mosaic account of the creation, I am at a loss to know by what means Mr. S. became apprized, not only of what was the *religion* of the first pair of mortals, but even of the fact that this pair ever enjoyed a state of existence. In conclusion, I may add, it is not alone my individual opinion that his list of *facts* is extended to a length which detracts from their novelty and interest. It is true, he may readily find several *Christian* precedents for so doing, but this is an authority I should suppose he would not lay hold of. I am further of opinion, that several of his facts (even those respecting the priests, vide Corres., No. 8, vol. 2, &c. &c.) will scarcely bear the test of proof, even of a circumstantial nature.

I am, sir, &c. &c.

New York, Oct. 1, 1827.

S.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH. BY C. SCHULTZ.

Continued from page 151.

190. It is a fact, that the Jews even derived their "scapegoat" for the sins of the people from the theology of Brahma.

191. It is a fact, that the Hindoos had attained to greater knowledge of astronomy 3000 years before Christ than any of your "inspired" nations had acquired 2 or 300 years ago.

192. It is a fact, that the primitive earth is admitted to have been formed of horizontal strata; and, if so, it follows of course, that if Noah's deluge had continued until this time still a mere deluge of water, it never could have deranged the horizontal strata in the manner we now find them. It is, therefore, manifest, that the present ruinous appearance of those strata must have been produced by a more solid agent than water; and what that agent was we have shown in our Review of the Deluge.

193. It is a fact, that the pretended proofs and arguments of Leslie, Campbell, Watson, and other advocates for "revelation" and "miracles," considered as *antidotes* to deism and theism, are weak in the extreme; as all such must be, when founded on such baseless authority; because they will prove too much: they will serve equally well to establish the truth of witchcraft, or of apparitions, or of any other general delusions under which mankind has been involved.

194. It is a fact, that some of Christ's "miracles" were actually performed, while others were fabricated altogether.

195. It is a fact, that the "wine," at his wedding feast, must have been provided privately, beforehand.

196. It is a fact, that his walking on the water is nothing more than a little straining of the truth; for, by means of a girdle of cork, or even of fish bladders, which were plenty enough, he would be enabled to walk on the water, and pretty high above the surface.

197. It is a fact, that Jesus "calmed the waves" by the same process that he saw mother Nature do it before him: for, while his fishermen were cleaning any fat fish on the sea shore, he, no doubt, perceived what an astonishing effect even the thick oil of fish had in calming the surface of the water along the shore; and, as olive oil abounded in that country, he, no doubt, tried further experiments with a more fluid oil, and thus found another agent for performing another miracle; for all that was now necessary for him to do was to pour a vial of oil, unperceived, over both sides of the boat, and the water would soon look as smooth as a lookingglass, around the boat.

198. It is a fact, that the Jews of respectability used caves or sepulchres for their dead; and, had poor Lazarus been buried *under ground*, all the Jesuses and apostles who ever existed could never have raised him from the dead. But it is evident that Lazarus was suffering under one of those numerous afflictions which only suspend animation, and had accidentally recovered when Jesus and Mary visited the tomb as a mark of friendship.

199. It is a fact, that the miracle of feeding such multitudes with a few fishes, as well as many others, were never performed at all.

200. It is a fact, that the prophecy of Christ concerning the destruction of Jerusalem was not even written until after that destruction had taken place!

204. It is a fact, that Christ and his followers believed that the day of judgment, or *end of this world*, was nigh at hand; and Jesus even ventured to prophesy, that the "generation" (then living) would not pass away before that day arrived!!! Every prophecy, therefore, is entitled to the same degree of credit as this is.

202. It is a fact, that your Bible is like a nose of clay, which can be moulded to suit every face; for so does that volume enable every sect to prove, that all the rest are wrong, and going headlong to the devil!

203. It is a fact, that the Christians condemn the god Jaggernaut, for burning, for a few minutes, a few old, vile, and guilty sinners; while they applaud their own God and Jesus, for condemning to an everlasting roasting millions of harmless and innocent infants, for crimes committed by their ancestors, thousands of years ago!!!

204. It is, therefore, an indisputable fact, that even the god Jaggernaut is a god of "tender mercy" in comparison with the god of the Christians!

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE SEVENTH.

Continued from page 172.

According to the Hindoo chronology, Brahma and Christna were created nearly 5000 years ago. In the year 3606, Christna descended on the earth for the purpose of defeating the evil machinations of Chivan. Christna was born of poor, obscure parents, his mother a *virgin*, and his father a *carpenter*. In his infancy he led a very humble life. He made war on the very venomous *serpent* called Calengam, whom, after a fierce contest, he defeated by *bruising his head*, he himself receiving, during the contest, *a wound in the heel*. He died, at last, between *two thieves*. He is represented as a meek, tender, and benevolent being; preaching the most pure and holy doctrines, and living a life of the most exemplary virtue. Indeed, throughout the sacred books of the Brahmans, charity, hospitality, mercy, and benevolence are strictly enjoined. Notwithstanding the exclusive claims of the Christians, the following maxims are to be found in the Hindoo books: "Never to hear patiently of evil; nor to speak that which is mischievous and wicked; to utter no lies, prevarication, or hypocrisy; to use no deceit, nor overreaching in trade or dealing; never to oppress the weak and humble, nor to offer any violence to your neighbor: to keep your hand from pilfering and theft, and in no way whatever to injure a fellow creature."

In the Hindoo worship, baptism, by sprinkling with water, is observed as a ceremony, initiating the children into the holy faith. Images of celestial beings are highly esteemed; and the Brahmans, or priests, arrogate the same rank and consequence as is done by this order among Christians. They not only consider themselves of more importance than

the sovereigns, but they think it a great degradation to eat the same food as is eaten by the kings. Their persons are held in sacred reverence, and on no account must their blood be shed, even should they commit murder. On all important occasions they are consulted by the state, and their advice is implicitly followed.

Although the resemblance between Christianity and the Hindoo religion is not so striking as that between the former and the Persian mythology, the points are strong enough to prove their reciprocal relation; and to show that Christianity has no other foundation than in the reveries of the Judian philosophers, who embodied or personified ideas, by giving reality to their own fancies and imaginations, the better to deceive and govern the multitude. On the other hand, these philosophers, who attached a secret meaning to these phantoms, pretended to trace the whole in the heavens or constellations. This has been placed in a clear light by Dupius, by Volney, and latterly by Dr. Constancio, in his lucid exposition of the "Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables," which has appeared in the *Correspondent*. To enable the reader to understand fully this able exposition, the doctor has referred to a celestial map. I had lately occasion to turn to a map of this description in order to ascertain the exact bearing of *Virgie* to another constellation. But how great was my surprise to find that the projector of this map had omitted the figure of the Virgin altogether. I soon ascertained that this spurious production, which was executed in this country, originated with a fanatic, who, by this prostitution of talents, wished to obliterate altogether one of the most undeniable proofs of the mythological origin of the Christian religion. It was the same spirit that led another fanatic to imagine, that by expunging the account of the causes of the progress of Christianity from an edition of Gibbon's History of Rome, which he reprinted in this country, he would be able to suppress this transcendent and incontrovertible exposition. Futile attempts! The age in which we live is too enlightened to countenance practices so barbarous, and so hostile to the advancement of useful knowledge.

Volney, in a note to a London edition of the "Ruins of Empires," states, on the authority of a Persian writer, that "the picture of the first decan of the Virgin represents a beautiful female with flowing hair, sitting in a chair, with two ears of corn in her hand, and suckling an infant, called Jesus by some nations, and Christ in Greek. In the library of the king of France (he continues) is a manuscript in Arabic, marked 1166, in which is a picture of the twelve signs; and that of the Virgin represents a young woman with an infant by her side. The whole scene, indeed, of the birth of Jesus is to be found in the adjacent part of the heavens. The stable is the constellation of the charioteer and the goat, formerly Capricorn; a constellation called the *stable of Iou*; and the word *Iou* is found in the name of Iouseph, (Joseph.) At no great distance is the ass of Typhon (the great she bear) and the ox or bull, the ancient attendants of the manger. Peter the potter, is Janus with his keys and bald forehead: the twelve apostles are the genii of the twelve months, &c. The Virgin has acted very different parts in the various systems of mythology: she has been the Isis of the Egyptians, who said of her in one of their inscriptions cited by Julian, *the fruit I have brought forth is the sun*. The

majority of traits drawn by Plutarch apply to her, in the same manner as those of Osiris apply to Bootes: also the seven principal stars of the she bear, called David's chariot, were called the chariot of Osiris; and the crown that was situated behind, formed of ivy, was called *Chem Osiris*, the tree of Osiris. The Virgin has likewise been Ceres, whose mysteries were the same with those of Isis and Mithra; she has been the Diana of the Ephesians; the great goddess of Syria, Cybele, drawn by lions; Minerva, the mother of Bacchus; Astrea, a chaste virgin taken up into heaven at the end of the golden age. Themas, at whose feet is the balance that was put in her hands. The Sybil of Virgil, who descends into hell, or sinks below the hemisphere with a branch in her hand."

Besides these resemblances, noticed by Volney, of the Christian legend to the oriental mythology, as delineated in the aspect of the heavens, or constellations, it is easy to trace the numerous mythological systems, which almost all nations have adopted, and the variety of changes which they have undergone, to the same source. After having altered history—disavowed the origin of physical representations—forgotten the signification of monuments, and even seen and read in them that which never existed, the desire of finding every where a familiar fable had but one step to take. It had only to sacrifice or put aside the objects of ancient credulity, and to disfigure an anterior religion, in order to bend it to the tales of a new mythology. Almost all the Tartar princes affect to carry back their genealogy to a celestial virgin, impregnated by a ray of the sun, or by some other equally marvellous means. In other words, the mythology which serves as the point of commencement of their annals has a reference to the age in which the sign of the virgin marked the summer solstice. The Greeks ascribed the origin of the Scythians to a virgin, half woman, half serpent, who had a commerce with Heroules or Jupiter, both emblems of the generating Sun. The Druids adored a virgin, who brought forth a child. By this the initiated understood, the celestial virgin who, every year, at midnight, glittering in the highest heaven, gave the world an infant God, the Sun, issuing from the winter solstice.

A modern writer, a native of Scotland, named Mackey, has recently published a work of great research, entitled "The Mythological Astronomy of the Ancients demonstrated, by restoring to their fables and symbols their original meanings;" in which he has, with a masterly pen, cleared away the rubbish that has so long obscured this naturally interesting subject, and exhibited as far as he could do it with safety in a despotic country, the imaginary founder of Christianity in his "pagan vestments." "Although the generality of mankind, he remarks, do not perceive the drift of the author of the Old Testament books, they are positive that the meaning which they have imbibed, though contrary to all the known laws of God, is the only true one. The Jews, in particular, he observes, hated every thing that related to astronomy. Their history, that is, the marvellous part of it, is composed of new materials; but of such as they had gleaned from the various nations among whom they had been in bondage; and, that their annals might have some appearance of originality, they took the liberty to make such alterations as would give them

a superficial appearance of *novelty*, by turning singulars into plurals, and plurals into singulars; and what was feminine they made to be masculine in working it into their histories. In some places, things *inanimate* have been turned into men, by adding the sign of the masculine gender. But, as assertions are not proofs, our author gives a variety of examples from the Bible; one of which I shall quote as a specimen of his style and manner of exposition.

"David has been said, by many authors, to be a mythological character. His name and his songs are exactly on a par with Apollo and his canticles. His marshalling his mighty men into twelve companies of three men each, and his having twelve captains, one for each month in the year, &c., looks very much like an astronomical arrangement. There are three different muster rolls of his mighties, which differ from one another. They may, however be all seen, free of expense, in the bulletins of the kings of Israel and Judah, 1st Chronicles, chap. 27, ver. 11; and 2d Samuel, chap. 23. His conduct before the handmaids of his servants, for which his wife Michal reproves him, looks very much like the Christna of the Hindoos, who danced with the *twelve gopies*, or twelve females, representing the twelve signs of the zodiac. But what has still more the appearance of astronomy is, that David, who had so many traits in his character of the singing conqueror Apollo, is the offspring of Jesse. This is but the consideration of Virgo, almost undisguised: the Isheh of the Egyptians, which the Greeks call Isis—the virgin mother of young Orus—the Sun. Here, again, we see the poverty of the inventive faculty of the Hebrew historians. Ever despising the annals of the pagans, and yet always taking them for their guide, without being able to disguise their symbols so as to hide them even from ordinary observers; for who does not know that neither the Jews nor Phenicians had a letter J in their alphabet. They could not, therefore, say Jesse but Isse, or sometimes Yesse. Isse the father of David, and Ishe the mother of Apollo, or the Sun, evidently mean the same thing."

To be continued.

Our Antagonists.—Of the two papers got up for the express purpose of writing down the *Correspondent*, one of them (the Christian, and Literary Register) has expired. The other (the Antidote) still continues its ravings, in defiance of truth, consistency, and probability. It will have been perceived, that we have not, of late, noticed editorially this vehicle of abuse, cant, and hypocrisy. We could not, indeed, without annoying our readers, condescend to continue a warfare, even though defensive, in which our assailants showed an utter contempt for veracity, for fair criticism, and for rational argument; and who, whatever might be the character of the evidence we brought forward, or however incontrovertible the argument we adduced, entered the lists with an evident determination not to abandon their prejudices, and, right or wrong, to maintain the cause of fraud and superstition. Nor have we stood alone in the opinion we had formed of the unfair dealing of the conductors of the Antidote. Several correspondents, some of whose remarks we have published, have, from time to time, unreservedly and indignantly ex-

pressed their disapprobation of the course they were pursuing; and we now subjoin a letter from *Philo Veritas*, by which it will be seen that he also declines continuing a contest with these men on the same grounds that led us to refrain from animadverting on the contents of their paper.

Sir—I send you my last reply to the *Antidote*. I have no objection to continue a friendly controversy with an adversary of tolerable knowledge and good faith, but I cannot consent to do so with gross ignorance, and the most manifest disregard to truth. For a man who will argue that numerous anachronisms are no evidence of want of authenticity, no excuse can be made but ignorance and stupidity: For a man who can deny that the Pentateuch contains any anachronism that can in the smallest degree invalidate the authenticity and the divine origin of the books, no excuse can be made but some habitual disregard of truth, that tempts him to deny the plainest facts when it is his interest to do so. However, for the last time let us see what force is in this man's assertions.

Suppose a play of Shakspeare should be published, which had hitherto escaped all the collectors of Shakspeare's works; and in this play allusions should be made to the trial of Warren Hastings, Esq., for his East India delinquencies, and also to the coronation of George IV. Could these mistakes be attributed to the carelessness of transcribers, or be considered as having no bearing against the authenticity of the play?

As to his assertion that there are no anachronisms of any moment in the Pentateuch, he may find them collected by Spinoza, by Father Simon, and, in v. 1, p. 53 to p. 86, of the English translation of Volney's *Researches on Ancient History*, by Colonel Corbet, London, 1821, in 2 volumes, 8vo. You yourself, Mr. editor, must have proofs enough of the same kind, which I beg of you to publish if you possess them, and fix at once the character of fraud, ignorance, and disregard to truth, that so conspicuously marks the writer in the *Antidote*. If you have no other, I am sure your readers will be obliged to you to republish Volney's collection, to which, were it needful, I can add largely.

Without attempting to meet my objections in the face—without being able to produce any cotemporary authority for the genuineness of any of the books of the Old Testament, for I aver again, and challenge all the parsons in your state upon the subject, that there is not one extant anterior to the school of Alexandria—without naming one cotemporary ancient author who has ever mentioned the Jews as existing as a people, under regular government, before the time when the Romans subjected the horde of Bedouin Arabs—I say, without meeting or answering one of my objections, because neither he nor any of his fraudulent fraternity are able to do it, from any extant original authority—this man goes on to make the following assertions, which, if he has any authority to make them, he is bound to produce:

The Pentateuch has existed thousands of years. *It is false: it has not.*
It was originally published as the work of Moses. *I deny it.*

It has been handed down through a long succession of ages as the work of Moses: *Yes: by the pious frauds of some Jewish and all the Christian priests.*

It has been universally received as his work. *I deny it: the Jews as-*

cribe the books of the Old Testament to Esdras, who says himself that the law was burnt, and he recomposed it.

It bears the evidence of genuineness and authenticity: *Yes: the evidence of anachronisms out of number.*

The Jews never doubted that the Pentateuch was a rule of action dictated through Moses by the Almighty. *The Jews who attribute the compilation to Esdras have great doubts of this assertion.*

I have done with this writer. To a person competent to cite original authorities, who will pay attention to the acknowledged rules of literary controversy, and who manifests a due regard to veracity, I will willingly reply as from one gentleman to another: but I cannot condescend to waste my ink and paper, much less my time, on such a writer as the *Antidote*. As a man so utterly ignorant of the subject can do no harm to any cause but his own, I quit him. He will write on, I presume, for it is the character of such writers, as Pope says:

Destroy his fib and sophistry: in vain:
The creature's at his dirty work again.

PHILO VERITAS.

Joint Stock Book Company.—It is contemplated to establish a company for the purpose of printing such liberal works as are difficult to be had in this country, even at a rate far exceeding their intrinsic value. The great and increasing demand for works of this description renders the project eligible; and when it is considered that arrangements may be made to supply the public at a fair and moderate price, and, at the same time, allow a handsome profit to the stockholders, it is believed that it cannot fail to engage general attention. Particulars will be given in our next.

Free Press Association.—The Sunday meetings of this Association will be held, in future, at *half past 2 o'clock P. M.*, instead of 4 o'clock P. M. Punctual attendance is requested.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Power of the Spirit.—A preacher, who not long since resided in the metropolis of Massachusetts, was very much given to intoxication, and rarely ever appeared in the pulpit without being gloriously inspired by the *spirit*. So prone was he to fuddling, that his congregation at length turned him out of their employ, and he was obliged to follow the vocation of a "travelling pedlar;" that is to say, he travelled around the country, distributing the "crumbs of comfortable doctrine," and levied contributions, to support himself in the good work. One day, in the course of his travels, he arrived at the village of W*****m, in Connecticut, and proceeded to stick up written notices about the place, that an *eminent* minister of the gospel would deliver a discourse at the meeting house, in the centre of the village, after which there would be a contribution [Oh, of course] to defray the expenses of the evening. This pleasing intelligence spread

like wild fire among the lovers of the word, and they flocked at the hour appointed, to swallow the goodly morsels of comfort promised by the Rev. Mr. Take-a-drop.

The last ding dong of the bell had died away, and the meeting house was crowded to overflowing. All eyes were anxiously bent towards the pulpit, but the holy man was not there. Half an hour passed—no appearance—the assembly began to think it all a hoax. Deacon Good-in-time-of-need, however, determined that the cause of religion should not suffer for the lack of preachers, and therefore proceeded, after divesting his time worn jaws of half a pound of tobacco, and nearly overflowing with juice a large spit box (which some of his neighbors had placed in his pew, to insure the congregation dry feet) to inform the audience that (God willing) he should hold forth to them. Adjusting a pair of huge iron spectacles upon his nasal organ, he marched with great solemnity up to the pulpit, followed by a little squab tailed, pug nosed dog. Judge, oh reader, the amazement and feelings of the worthy deacon, when upon entering it his eyes encountered the Rev. Mr. Take-a-drop, extended upon the floor, holding in one hand a bottle, which seemed, by the effluvia which arose from it, to have contained, but a short time previous, some of the real Cognac, and in the other the holy volume. Ah! he was diabolically cocked, reader. Deacon Good-in-time-of-need, after smoothing his hair, which had become, at the sight of the object before him, as stiff as “quills upon the fretful porcupine,” took hold of the *spirit-ual* man for the purpose of arousing him, just as he happened to be imagining, or dreaming that Bēelzebub was seizing him. Feeling the rough gripe of the deacon, he suddenly started up, and, brandishing the bottle, exclaimed, “Avaunt thou prince of dev———Here he discovered his error, for his adversary not liking to have his brains beat out, before so many folks, seized him by the hair, and bellowed for “help,” and his dog, thinking his master in danger, barked heartily, which brought the Rev. Mr. Take-a-drop to his senses, who seeing the “head and front of his offending” determined to “escape the wrath to come,” by leaping out of a window close by the pulpit, which he effected, and took to his heels, and never after did he show his carcase in the neighborhood.

Matrimony.—Those who have read the Athanasian Creed, will immediately see the application of the following:

Whoever will be married, before all things it is necessary that he hold the conjugal faith.

Which faith, except every one keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall be scolded at everlastingly.

And the conjugal faith is this, that there were two rational beings created, both equal, yet one superior to the other.

The inferior shall bear rule over the superior.

The man is superior to the woman, and the woman inferior to the man.

Yet both are equal, and the woman shall govern the man.

The woman is commanded to obey the man, and the man ought to obey the woman.

And yet there are not two obedients, but one obedient.

For there is one dominion nominal of the husband, and another dominion real of the wife.

And yet there are not two dominions, but one dominion.

Moreover we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge, that wives must submit themselves to their husbands, and be subject in all things.

So we are forbidden by the conjugal faith to say, they shall be at all influenced by their wills, or pay any regard to their commands.

The man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man.

And yet the man shall be the slave of the woman, and the woman the tyrant of the man.

So that, as aforesaid, the subjection of the superior to the inferior is to be believed.

He, therefore, that would marry, must thus think of the woman and of the man.

Furthermore, it is necessary to submissive matrimony, that he also believe the infallibility of the wife.

For the right faith is this, that the wife is fallible and infallible.

Perfectly fallible and perfectly infallible, of an erring soul and an unerring mind subsisting.

Fallible as touching her human nature, and infallible as touching her female sex.

Who, although she be fallible and infallible, yet is she not two, but one woman.

Who submitted to lawful matrimony to acquire unlawful dominion, and promised religiously to obey, that she might rule in injustice and folly.

This is the conjugal faith, which, except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be married.

Tyranny to the wife, slavery to the husband, and ruin to the family.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, to the end of the world.

Amen.

Removal.—The office of the *Correspondent* is removed to No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library, where all orders and communications are requested to be forwarded.

Printing in all its branches, also *Bookbinding*, neatly and expeditiously executed on the most reasonable terms.

The following publications may be had as above:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, Lond. ed., 2 vols. in one—\$1.25.

*.*Orders for books, in every department of literature, punctually attended to.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 13.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 20, 1827.

VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HISTORY OF SAMUEL.

Continued from page 149.

But another difficulty remains unexplained: how could an act so insignificant, so trivial, as that of pouring over the head, of rubbing on the forehead a little oil or grease, have the prodigious effect not only of persuading a simple shepherd that he was seriously called to be king, but also to extend that persuasion to the immense majority of the nation, and even to Saul himself, and his son Jonathan, who makes the formal declaration, ch. 23, v. 17, and ch. 24, v. 21? It must be confessed that this fact, at first sight, appears singular; but when we examine its accessaries and antecedents, it becomes natural and simple, like all the other parts of this history, because it is found to be the effect of an opinion and a prejudice which, for a long time, had prepared the peoples' minds.

It is very true, that before this period no chief of the laity or military had received the ceremony of the unction and rubbing with oil; but the rite, nevertheless, had existed a long while as a public, solemn observance, surrounded by circumstances the best calculated to impose respect, since it was the rite of inauguration of the high priest of God; the act which consecrated the first high priest, Aaron, by the hand of the legislator and founder of religion, Moses. This is what we learn in the 29th chapter of Exodus, where details are given worthy of attention. God there says to Moses, "This is what you shall do to consecrate Aaron and his children to the office of the priesthood: Take a bullock and two rams without spot; unleavened bread, cakes unleavened, moistened with oil, made with flour and meal; place them in a basket; present them with the bullock and rams; bring Aaron near and his children to the door of the tent where the ark is; wash them with water; take away their clothing and clothe Aaron with tunic, with a long robe, &c.; place the mitre on their heads, and the holy diadem upon the mitre; and take the oil of anointing and pour it upon the head of Aaron and rub him with it: also bring near his two sons and clothe them without anointing them; and they shall be consecrated to be my priests forever."

We see here all the pomp and apparel of the ceremony of unction performed in presence of the ark of the god Jehovah, and of the people of Israel; and we perceive how easy it was to transfer the religious respect to the head of a king. If this was a novelty of Samuel's invention, certainly he did not have the credit of inaugurating that character. If it had been a novelty invented even by Moses, we may be assured that it did not

produce the effect that he desired. But, brought up among the Egyptians, and in the practice of borrowing from them the greater part if not all his ideas and ceremonies, he evidently derived this also from the same source. Be this, however, as it may, what could have been the motive, what idea conducted its first inventor or inventors to contrive a practice so singular? It may have been useful among the society in which it was practised—among nations half savage, beginning to enter into regular society. I can figure to myself a people of Upper Egypt, naked, or nearly so, from the nature of the climate, wishing to impress upon some one a particular sign of command, or of some public functions. How would they establish that sign? Should it be a staff, a cap of stuff or feathers, a small club sceptre, or a band on the forehead? All these objects, moveable and fragile, might be seized by the violence of the first invader; the man would be no longer any thing. They would have remarked that certain liquids, such as fat and oil, adhered and were fixed to the skin in a tenacious manner, difficult to efface; water would not do it, and dust rendered the mark more visible. They would find this mark suitable to their purpose; the effect of the common dust would give them the idea of that which was colored; they would have the red corail, minium cinnabar, yellow ochres, green copper, the blue of certain shell, fish, and vegetables. The colored mark which would thus result would become, among these people, a sign of utility and beauty. Hence we find it, at all times and in all countries, among all nations, even among those the most polished.

This sign is striking among the Indians, where it bears a religious character, since the adorers of the three gods distinguish one another by the color and form of the marks on the forehead. It is found in all the isles of the Indian and Pacific oceans; we see it among our American savages, as well as among their brethren, the Tartars of Asia, and among most of the blacks of Africa. To render it more permanent, the art is perfected by causing the color to penetrate the skin, by pricking with fine points of fish bones, or metallic needles, which constitutes the art of tattooing, rendered celebrated by the accounts of modern travellers. Thus, in its origin and object, the ceremony of sacerdotal and royal unction, to which the people and the Jewish worship attach so high and mysterious importance, was nothing more than the tattooing of an individual, in order to render him indelibly recognisable.

But, to close the history of Samuel, I would explain why he was so determined in destroying king Saul, to give him a rival, and a successor, who could not be considered but as a usurper. I admit, as a primary motive, the resentment of the priest against the interference of Saul in the functions of the sacrificer and divine. But this motive alone does not seem to be sufficient. There must have been some other cause more radical, and I find it in the physical infirmity of Saul, which was epilepsy. The Hebrew text authorizes this idea. Such a complaint, joined to that of an evil spirit for the cause, must have rendered Saul very unpopular. He must, also, have fallen in public estimation, as much by the violent paroxysms of anger, to which he was more and more subject, as by the mediocrity of his means, both moral and political. Samuel, who

had made the erroneous choice of such a chief, could not forgive his own mistake; and it was to correct this that he invented the pretext which we have seen. Besides, in the final execution of his design, he introduced an arrangement worthy of remark: he did not choose an aged man, capable of being an immediate competitor; he took a young man, 20 or 24 years old, who, the opposite of Saul, then aged about 55, would leave that king time to finish his course.

We see the conduct of Samuel explained throughout by natural causes, founded on the manners and prejudices of his nation; we find probable motives for all his actions; in his personal character always the same, always calculating, artful, hypocritical, ambitious of power, beating up against the difficulties of his position with as much art as circumstances would allow. An examination of the text will show how transparent is the veil of prodigies and wonders which enveloped him; that those miracles existed nowhere but in the visionary brain of an ignorant people; and we cannot but be astonished at the blind infatuation which pretends to sustain, even at this day, such savage errors. But the world, which at each generation becomes childish, is always governed by old habits. Each one finds his account in them. Some discover in the illusions a plot to manage, and they manage it after the fashion of Samuel and his brethren. Others find food and authority requiring belief, which seems one of the attributes of human nature. Such is the mechanism of that nature, that when, in our infancy, our nerves have received certain impressions, and have been bent to certain habits, our whole life after, even the sounds and words which are connected with it, have the magic power to revive and resuscitate in us the same movements, and the same dispositions. We have been filled from our cradle with these Bible stories; the names of its personages have been connected with certain opinions and ideas; and thus those judgments which are infused into us are incorporated with us, and act mechanically all our lives: I have often thought, and have even experienced it, that if, at an advanced age, we were presented with the same accounts, disguised with other names, and as coming from China or India, we should decide very differently respecting them. Here is the solution of the problem which often puzzles society, and consists in finding, in persons otherwise well constituted, a sane and right judgment on all things which they have learnt of themselves, but constantly false where they have been taught by others in their youth. In the first case, their mind or intellectual principle has operated for itself; it consequently has sensation and judgment. In the second case, it is but a machine for repetition, a discordant clock, the work of which does not chime with the dial governed by the sun. Thus we see often in old age the impressions of infancy reappear, which had slept during mature life. During the latter period, our reason, always on the stretch, repels with disdain lonely meditations and returning recollections. In old age, our nerves fall back into a state of vegetation, purely animal, taking up the terrors of infancy.

To be continued.

A FUTURE STATE.

Continued from page 181.

The polypus furnishes an analogy equally unreal. The vitality of the several parts is never destroyed: and there having been no death, there is no resurrection. Immerse a polypus in boiling water until vitality is extinct; then cut him in pieces and see if each of either piece will produce a perfect polypus. And if they would, and if your polypus, when thus prepared, is capable of being subdivided a hundred times, at each time reproducing a perfect polypus, are all these polypii which you have thus produced the identical polypus with which you commenced the operation? If they are, here is not only the long contested doctrine of trinity in unity, (so often demonstrated to be a mathematical absurdity,) but the far more wonderful doctrine or fact of century in unity, demonstrated to your hands. But the truth is, the identity, in all but one, at most, of these polypii, is lost; which makes an end of the argument. It is a mere mode of multiplying and continuing the species; not an example of either the immortality or the resurrection of the individual. In brief, it no more proves, or conduces to prove, man's future existence, than the cutting the twigs of a willow tree into ten thousand slips, and letting each, when placed in a suitable soil, grow till it became a tree as big as its parent, would prove that each of these ten thousand willows was the identical parent tree.

The last pretended analogy is the well known revivification of flies, and some other animals, after they have been long apparently dead. We know that men sleep, and, while sleeping, lose consciousness—the only proof an individual can have of his own existence—and after a few hours, or, perhaps, a few moments, awake again and resume the consciousness they have lost. But he would, we apprehend, be more bold than wise who, on this foundation, would undertake to build a serious argument in favor of man's future existence. The bear, the dormouse, and some other animals, sleep for months, and then awake; but who, from this, ever argued the immortality of the soul? Cold blooded animals, we know, may, under certain circumstances, have the vital functions almost indefinitely suspended, and again restored: but we believe no one even of these animals was ever seriously suspected of being immortal. Snakes and fish, of certain species, may be thoroughly and perfectly frozen, and, in a more genial temperature, may be revivified: but as long as man cannot, why attempt any analogical inference from the fact? The truth is, with regard to all animals, and man among others, that animation, or, in other words, the vital functions, may be suspended in a variety of ways without being destroyed. Instead, therefore, of hunting after analogies among insects, we had better draw our inferences respecting man from man. Animation becomes suspended in a human being from electricity, from suffocation, from concussion, from fright, or from some other source. Means are applied and animation is restored, or, in other words, action is restored to the vital functions. All this is perfectly familiar; and there are, probably, few who have not known instances. But have the individuals thus, from time to time, resuscitated, been thenceforth visibly im-

mortal? We apprehend not. We apprehend that, sooner or later, the common and, as we believe, inevitable lot of their race has been or must be theirs; to die, and to have the particles which once composed their bodies disposed, either wholly or in part, into new combinations, where their identity can no longer be traced.

These boasted analogies, then, like all the other arguments we have noticed, are utterly insufficient to establish the fact, or even the rational probability, of man's future existence. What, then, (keeping in view the wholesome principle, that our belief should be according to evidence,) ought to be our belief in this matter? We have evidence—the evidence of our senses, the concurring testimony of all tradition, of all history, and of all human experience, that man dies: the evidence is universal, unvarying, full, convincing, overwhelming. Is there any similar proof that man will live again? There is none. Visit the catacombs of Africa, the tombs of Asia, the cemeteries of Europe, and the burrows of America: they tell you but one tale, and that tale is, “dust to dust.” The bones of those who were deposited in the “dark and narrow house” three thousand years ago still remain, unmoved and inanimate, in the niche, the urn, or the mould which first received them. If they have not revived in three thousand years, will they in three hundred thousand? America has been peopled by civilized man for more than two centuries; during which time some millions, of their own and of the aboriginal race, have died. Has any single individual of them ever been known to rise from the dead? No. Have we any rational proof for believing, or ground for supposing, that, since creation, any one individual of the human race has ever risen from death to a life of immortality? No. It is plain, then, that, whether on the score of experience, of evidence, or of argument, there is no proof for the dogma of a future existence.

Having arrived at this result, we may safely pause until some proof is offered before we assent to a creed which violates probability, contradicts experience, and is unsupported by reason. But, at some convenient season, we may probably perform a work of supererogation, by suggesting a few arguments and considerations tending to place the fallacy and absurdity of this fascinating (because flattering) creed in a still stronger light; and we are much mistaken if we do not then also show, that it is a creed not merely unfounded, but absolutely injurious to the human race.

H.

THE QUESTIONS OF ZAPATA.

From the French of Voltaire.

Continued from page 169.

17. Can I, without assistance, determine whether the three angels, to whom Sarah served up an entire calf for dinner, had tangible bodies, or whether they only borrowed the forms they appeared in? and how it could happen that the two angels God sent to Sodom should excite in the Sodomites certain abominable inclinations? These heavenly messengers must have been extremely pretty! But wherefore did Lot, entitled the just, offer his two daughters to the Sodomites in the room of the two angels?—Ah,

the baggages! they went to bed now and then, it seems, to their father. My learned masters, you must allow that this was not quite decent.

18. Will my hearers believe me when I inform them that Lot's wife was changed into a statue of salt? What reply shall I make, should they tell me that this story is most likely nothing but a gross imitation of the ancient fable of Euodia, and that such a statue would dissolve in the rain?

19. What shall I urge in justification of the benedictions that fell on Jacob the Just, who deceived his father Isaac, and who robbed Laban, his father in law? When I relate that God appeared to Jacob at the top of an immense ladder, and that Jacob fought one whole night with an angel, what shall I add by way of explanation?

20. What must I say upon the subject of the Jews' sojourn in Egypt, and of their escape from thence? In Exodus we are informed that they remained four hundred years in Egypt; but in making a just calculation we only find it to be two hundred and five. How came Pharaoh's daughter to bathe in the Nile, where it appears no one ever bathes on account of the crocodiles?

21. Moses having espoused the daughter of an idolater, why did not God, when he selected him for his prophet, reproach him on this account? How was it that Pharaoh's magicians performed the same miracles as Moses did, with only the exception of covering the country with lice and other vermin? How could they turn all the waters into blood, since Moses had already caused them to undergo this transformation? Wherefore did Moses, conducted as he was by the Almighty, and placed at the head of six hundred and thirty thousand combatants, take to flight with his people, instead of possessing himself of Egypt, wherein all the firstborn had been destroyed by God himself? From the time that Egypt was first noticed in real history, it never was capable of assembling an army of one hundred thousand men. Why did Moses, in flying with his troops from the land of Gessen, instead of going in a straight forward direction to Canaan, traverse the half of Egypt; and then retrace his path to Pihahiroth, a spot situated over against Memphis, between Baalzephon and the Red Sea? In fine, how could Pharaoh follow him with all his cavalry, since it is declared, in the fifth plague of Egypt, that God caused all the cattle to perish? Besides, Egypt being intersected by so many canals, never had but a very small body of cavalry.

22. How am I to reconcile what is said in Exodus with St. Steven's discourse in the Acts of the Apostles, and with the passages in Jeremiah and in Amos? In Exodus we are told that the Jews sacrificed to Jehovah in the desert during forty years; Jeremiah, Amos, and St. Stephen, say, that neither sacrifice nor victims were offered during all the above time. According to Exodus they constructed the tabernacle in which was deposited the ark of the covenant; and according to St. Stephen in the Acts, they bore about with them the tabernacles of Moloc and of Remphan.

23. I am not a sufficiently good chemist to extricate myself happily in respect to the affair of the golden calf, which we are told in Exodus was formed in one single day, and reduced by Moses into ashes. Are these to be considered as two miracles, or are they two things possible for human art to accomplish?

24. Is it, also, to be considered as a miracle, that the conductor of a nation, in the midst of a desert, could cause the throats of twenty-three thousand men belonging to this nation to be cut, by one single tribe out of twelve; and that twenty-three thousand men permitted themselves to be massacred without making any defence?

25. Ought I, also, to regard as a miracle, or as an ordinary act of justice, that twenty-four thousand Hebrews should be put to death, because one among them had lain with an Midianitish woman, whilst Moses himself had married a Midianite? And were not these Hebrews, whom they represent to us as being so ferocious, a somewhat civil sort of folks, to suffer their throats thus to be cut for the sake of the wenches?

26. What explication shall I give to that law which prohibits the eating of the hare, *because it chews the cud, and is not cloven footed*, whilst, in fact, hares have cloven feet, and do not ruminate? We have already seen that this excellent book has made God a bad geographer—a bad chronologist—a bad natural philosopher; and it does not make him a better naturalist. What reasons shall I give in favor of several other laws not a whit less sage; such as that of the waters of jealousy, and of the punishment of death against any man who should lay with his wife at the time of her monthly indisposition? Shall I be able to justify these barbarous and ridiculous laws, which, it is said, emanated from God himself.

27. What must I say to convince those who may seem astonished that a miracle should be necessary in order to pass the Jordan; a river which in its widest part measures only forty-five feet, a space which the smallest raft would enable one to clear; a river which was fordable in so many places, as witness the forty-two thousand Ephraimites murdered at one of the fords of this river by their brethren?

28. What answer am I to make to those who may ask how it happened that the walls of Jerico fell at the sound of the rams' horns? And why the other cities were not made to fall in the same way?

29. What excuse shall I make for the courtesan Rahab, in respect to the deed by which she betrayed her country? Wherefore was this treason necessary, since the mere sound of the rams' horns would have been quite sufficient to take the town? And how shall I fathom the depth of the divine decrees, which have ordained that our Divine Saviour Jesus Christ should have his origin deduced from this courtesan, *Rahab*, as well as from the incest that *Thamer* committed with *Judah*, her father-in-law, and the adultery of *David* and *Bathsheba*? So much the ways of God are incomprehensible!

30. Must I, or must I not, give my approbation to Joshua, who hung up thirty-one petit kings, and usurped their estates; that is to say, their villages?

31. How shall I speak of the battle which Joshua fought against the Amorreehs at Bethron, on the road to Gabaan? The Lord caused it to rain down from heaven immense stones, all the way from Bethron to Aseca; there is a distance of five leagues from Bethron to Aseca; thus the Amorreehs were exterminated by rocks which tumbled down from the sky during their march of five leagues. The scriptures inform us, that this event took place at noon; wherefore, then, did Joshua command the sun and the moon to stand still in the middle of the firmament, in order

to have sufficient time to finish the destruction of a little troop which had been, it seems, already exterminated? For what reason did he command the moon to stop at midday? Could the sun and moon, then, remain stationary for a whole day? What commentator shall I have recourse to in order to explain this extraordinary fact?

32. What apology shall I make for Jephtha, who immolated his own daughter, and caused the throats to be cut of forty-two thousand Jews of the tribe of Ephraim, who could not pronounce the word *Shiboleth*?

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE SEVENTH.

Continued from page 188.

In the first ages of the church, the opponents of Christianity, among other objections which they brought against it, asserted that it was not a new religion, but a mere transcript of oriental mythology, of which its founders, who were Jews, had acquired some knowledge when captives among the Assyrians. Tertullian, in his "Apology for the Christians," so far from denying this, seems to admit the truth of the accusation. "Many (says this writer, c. 16) suppose, with great probability, that the Sun is our God, and they refer us to the religion of the Persians." A more modern writer, sir William Jones, in support of whose veracity we have the testimony of nearly the whole Christian world, informs us that the Sanscrit Dictionary of the Hindoos, compiled more than 2000 years ago, contains the whole story of the incarnate deity, born of a virgin, and miraculously escaping in his infancy from the reigning tyrant of his country, who "sought the young child's life," and put to death all the children of the place of his nativity, "from two years old, and under," in the hope of destroying the infant god. In the same work we have the accounts of his miracles, his preachings, and his actions, even to the minuteness of his washing the feet of his disciples.

It will readily be perceived, that the whole tendency of this investigation is to render doubtful, if not to destroy, all belief in the existence of the person called Jesus Christ. When I began to reflect on this subject, about thirty years ago, I can well remember that the first doubts which arose in my mind respecting it were obviated by the perusal of a passage in Josephus, in which that writer, as I then believed, expressed himself in such a way as to convince the most incredulous that the promised Messiah had actually appeared on the earth. The passage is as follows: "About that time appeared Jesus, a wise man, if, indeed, it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a performer of wonderful works—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure; and he led many Jews, and many even of the Greeks. *This was the Christ.* And when Pontius Pilate, and the great men among us, had punished him on the cross,

those at least who from the first loved him did not cease, for he appeared to them the third day again alive; the holy prophets having spoken these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the stock of Christians named from him still exists."

It was not long, however, before I inquired how Josephus, being a Jew, believing the prophecies, and well acquainted with the prevailing opinions among his countrymen, as to the princely descent and appearance of the Messiah; his coming as a mighty conqueror, who would "put all the enemies of the Jews under his feet;" "of whose kingdom there was to be no end;" who was to "purge Israel from all iniquity," and to establish universal peace and felicity on earth—How, I say, a historian so renowned as Josephus could assert that an obscure individual, the offspring of poor parents, and who had been put to death by the very people he had come to purify, was "the Christ," the deliverer of his nation from the Roman yoke—these difficulties staggered and confounded me. Besides, it appeared to me, that if Josephus had really said what he is alleged to have stated respecting this personage, he could not have been otherwise than a Christian. I anxiously turned over the other parts of the books of Josephus, in the hope of finding some passage to corroborate this one; but the search was in vain. Not another sentence could I find, in which the name of Jesus of Nazareth, or of Christ, was even mentioned. On following up the inquiry, I was soon convinced that the passage had been interpolated, and was one of those pious frauds to which the priests of all religions have resorted, to impose on the credulous. Several of the early fathers of the Christian church, who frequently refer to Josephus, are entirely silent as to this pretended admission of the existence of Jesus; and it has been clearly shown by Blondell, Leclerc, Lardner, Gibbon, Warburton, and a number of other writers, that no such passage is contained in the early copies of the works of Josephus.

Determined, if possible, to get at the truth, my attention was next drawn to the works of Tacitus, who, it is pretended, has spoken of Jesus, and of the religion which he founded, in so positive a manner as to defy all cavil as to his existence. The passage referred to is this: "Therefore, to extinguish the rumor, Nero subdued the accused, and put to the most exquisite punishments those who, being hateful for their crimes, were by the common people called Christians. Christ, the author of that name, had, by the procurator Pontius Pilate, been capitally punished in the reign of Tiberius; and the fatal superstition, for a while suppressed, again broke out, not only through Judea, the origin of that evil, but in the city itself, whither all things that are atrocious or shameful flow together and become famous.

Against the genuineness of this passage two objections occur. First, it is not noticed by Tertullian, in his "Apology for the Christians." This primitive father (as appears from the 5th chapter of his work) ransacked all the early writers for facts which had the appearance of recognising the origin of Christianity; but, although he quotes Tacitus by name regarding the Jews, he makes no mention of what this historian is alleged to have said as to the "fatal superstition," or of Christ, the author of it. Secondly, it was not until the 16th century that this famous passage was

heard of; and even then it was acknowledged that the copies of the Roman history containing it were taken from a single manuscript, written so late, according to Ernesti, as the 10th or 11th century. This solitary copy was brought from a monastery of monks in Westphalia, and presented to pope Leo X., who immediately gave it his sanction. Of the integrity of this successor of St. Peter, we have a noted specimen in his declaration to the clergy, that "the *fable* of Jesus Christ brought grist to their mill, and it was but fair play to keep up that that kept up them." Would a man of such sentiments, and whose station gave him unbounded influence, hesitate about the means employed, when the object contemplated was his own aggrandizement? It is well known that hundreds of books were forged by the early Christian bishops and priests, who had every inducement to support a system so defective as that of Christianity; and which they had every facility of doing, as printing was not then invented, and the clergy claimed the exclusive right of being the depositaries and the expounders of the archives of the church.

The only remaining document, by which it has been attempted to prove the existence of Jesus, is a letter of Pliny, in which that learned man speaks of Christianity as "a vile and excessive superstition;" the professors of which were so abandoned and wicked, that they had no reliance on each other; and when they met to sing hymns to Christ as to a god, it was necessary to swear that there should be no throat cutting, adultery, nor theft, till the ceremony was over. This document is admitted to be genuine. But (as Lardner has shown) it was not written till the year 107, a period so distant from that in which Jesus is said to have lived, that it proves nothing as to that fact.

Here, then, we are left without any evidence of the existence of the supposed founder of Christianity but what arises from writings fabricated by those who had a deep interest in giving currency to the legend. Like the Mithras of the Persians, the Christna of the Hindoos, and the Moses of the Jews, the Jesus of the Christians was originated when men's minds were enveloped in midnight darkness, and before science had shed a ray of light on benighted mortals. The votaries of all religions—holding out their Zendavestas, their Shasters, their Targums, their Korans, and their Bibles—exultingly tell us that these writings contain a clear and explicit revelation of the divine will, and were sent from heaven for the purpose of illuminating and guiding man. But can books, the contents of which exhibit nothing but palpable contradictions, destructive of the credit of each other, have any pretensions to this high authority? Can such writings be called the will of an infinitely wise and omnipotent God? Had they been dictated by such a being, would they not have been worthy of himself—without fault, and free from all imperfections? Would they not have contained every instruction necessary for mankind, and all knowledge useful to them in the utmost perfection, without requiring a host of magi, of brahmins, of muftis, and of priests, to explain their meaning? Would not the revealed will of Deity have been as much superior to all human writing as the sun is superior to a candle? But these writings display no such superiority. They bear indelible marks of a rude age and ignorant authors; they are evidently a collection of the writings of a very barbarous and superstitious people; and, instead of surpassing

every human composition, they are greatly inferior to many of them in every kind of useful information and instruction.

"If revelation (observes an able writer) be as liable to be misunderstood as arguments drawn from reason, it is a no surer guide to mankind. If it needs reason's assistance to explain it, it is weaker. If it do not open our understandings, so as to make us agree more clearly, and on better grounds, it is not a greater light. If it confound reason, it can never produce rational conviction. If it have not plainly the advantage of reason when compared with that alone, it is not superior to reason; or if reason have the advantage of revelation when compared, revelation is inferior to reason. If we can know nothing truly by revelation without reason, revelation is not a true light. Revelation must be entirely true, perfectly plain, and easy to be understood—intrinsically pure, just, consistent, and harmonious—its precepts and doctrines must all tend to make men wiser, better, and happier. Without these qualifications, it wants the proofs of a divine original; it seems to be given in vain, and cannot be the revelation of perfect wisdom. Men of sense, devoid of prejudices of education, will conclude it to be no extraordinary light; and that no more is necessary to direct the faith and practice of mankind, than adhering, in judgment, to reason only—freed from all enthusiasm and imposture; and, in practice, to virtue alone—freed from all superstition."

Progress of Liberal Opinions.—We are almost every day receiving the most flattering accounts of the diffusion of liberal principles throughout the United States. Notwithstanding the measures adopted by the priesthood to prevent the establishment of this paper, and to arrest the progress of the *Free Press Association*, there is no one, who is not determined to shut his eyes against the light, but must acknowledge that the success of both has been unprecedented. It has, in fact, exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the friends of truth. Although great pains are taking to represent those who attend the lectures of the Association in the most contemptible light, we question if any religious assembly in this, or in any other country, is composed of individuals whose characters stand higher, or whose general deportment is more correct; while we challenge the most devout worshipper in any sect to adduce an instance where greater order and decorum are observed at their general meetings. One effect of this has been to attract audiences so numerous, that, although the Association has been organized little more than eight months, it has been found necessary to remove to a larger place of meeting no less than *three* times; and such is the progress of this increase, that not more than one half of those who are desirous of being admitted can at present be accommodated. The door of the Hall is surrounded long before the hour of commencement, and it is with difficulty that even the ladies can obtain a seat.

These facts speak volumes. But, highly pleasing as they must be to all liberal minds, it cannot fail to increase their satisfaction when they know that New York is not the only place in this country where a union has been formed for the purpose of promulgating rational principles by the establishment of public lectures. We have before noticed the forma-

tion of a society at Paterson, N. J., called the "Paterson Free Reading Society;" which, although it originally contemplated objects similar to those of the New York Association, has confined itself, till lately, to creating a library of scientific and philosophical works of established character. Now, however, that they are daily receiving an accession of numbers, and fully alive to the necessity of rendering men wiser, in order to make them better and happier, they have commenced regular and public lectures on Sunday, similar to those delivered at the Free Press Association of this city. Aware of the restraint which fanaticism has imposed on the press, we were, a few days ago, agreeably surprised to receive a number of a paper published at Paterson, entitled the "*Chronicle*," containing the Address of the "Free Reading Society," in which the fact we have just mentioned is announced, and a concise view given of the objects and principles of that Association.

Other similar institutions are now forming in different parts of the country, of which we are in possession of some particulars; but these we must postpone till our next. Meanwhile, we publish the Address of the Paterson Society, as a document that cannot fail to be interesting to our readers, and as containing a correct exposition of the principles that are advocated by the friends of truth.

PATERSON FREE READING SOCIETY.

As the "Paterson Free Reading Society" intend to meet, in future, on the first day of every week, for the purposes originally contemplated by its formation, it may not be improper, on this occasion, to give some explanation of its views, objects, and principles.

Some may think it singular, that we call ourselves, in this country of universal freedom, a "Free Reading Society." The fact, however, is, although we may read what works we please, we cannot always obtain such works as please us. Our libraries contain but few scientific and philosophical works of established character; and so great is the influence of fanaticism, that every publication which is supposed to militate against religion, however useful, is proscribed, or consigned to the flames, by its narrow minded votaries; while society is inundated with tracts, and other devotional productions, calculated to mystify and debase the mind. To remedy this evil, has been one of the principle objects of our union. Already we are in possession of several valuable works which were beyond the reach of individuals; and, as our means increase, others will be added to the number. Another primary object of this institution is the establishment of regular and public lectures on every subject conducive to the happiness of man. Although the errors of theology, that source of all the misery with which humanity is afflicted, will be the principal object of our animadversions, science and general literature will occupy a considerable share of our attention. Aware that "knowledge is power," and that tyranny of every description exists only where ignorance predominates, it is our determined purpose to make every effort to diffuse liberal principles, and thus emancipate the human mind from mental slavery; for although in this country we justly boast of possessing more political liberty than any other people on the earth, it is a melancholy and undeniable fact, that superstition has erected an empire

here more extended and fatal than in those countries where religion is established, and protected by civil power.

The education of children, agreeably to the most approved and most rational systems, is also intended to be effected by this Association. In New York, a school of practical education has been established, where the pupils are taught, on moderate terms, knowledge of every kind; not mere sounds and signs, called words, but by presenting to them, as far as practicable, the objects themselves; by accustoming them to observe and to think, in tracing the analogy and difference between realities; to acquire the habit of analysing and arranging every thing on sight; and, by cultivating their judgment, render them less liable to be duped by the designing, and necessarily to improve their memory. In this institution, the utmost care is taken to form the temper and moral character of the children, and to render them industrious and useful, by making them practically acquainted with agriculture, mechanics, manufactures, commerce, and domestic and political economy. It is our intention to introduce a similar mode of instruction, whenever our funds will justify the attempt. Meanwhile, we shall do all in our power, to form the minds of our offspring on those principles which we consider best adapted to make them useful members of society, and to promote their own happiness.

In endeavoring to accomplish these important objects, we have laid it down as an invariable rule never to employ invective against those who may differ from us in opinion. Ours is not an Association that professes to speak peace, while it employs the dagger. Satisfied that we have truth on our side, we require no other auxiliary but the faculty of reason, which all enjoy, and are capable of exercising. We are more desirous of rearing a fabric possessing in itself attractions sufficiently powerful to engage attention, than in entering the arena of disputation; fully persuaded that the only force requisite to dissipate error is the force of truth, and that the only way to accomplish this is by a united persevering effort to render the knowledge of truth universal.

The advantages to be derived from becoming a member of this society must be obvious to every person who is at all acquainted with the measures pursued by the enemies of truth to prevent a disclosure of the unprincipled means by which they continue to injure, and, frequently, to ruin, its most strenuous champions. Unable to carry their base designs into effect by unjust and arbitrary laws, and sufficiently aware that their dogmas cannot stand the test of argument, they resort to secret means to destroy their opponents. They use the influence which they have obtained in families, to sow the seeds of detraction, and, assassin like, to strike the dagger into the heart of their victim at the very moment when they know he has not the power or the means of defending himself. But, once a member of this Association, he will have the power as well as the means of counteracting these machinations. United with those possessing moral courage like himself, and confident in the justice of his cause, he will fearlessly advocate the truth, in spite of all opposition, and with the certainty that it must ultimately prevail over superstition, fraud, and priestcraft.

Sunday.—We rejoice to find that the law of this state *compelling* the observance of the Sabbath, or Sunday, has been repealed. It was arbi-

trary, unjust, and unconstitutional. As a *civil* regulation, we consider a day of relaxation from labor or business as highly expedient; but whenever the observance of that day is made an engine, as it has hitherto been, in the hands of an arrogant priesthood to control the human mind, it becomes injurious to society. We have good reasons for believing that the salutary repeal of the obnoxious law was effected by a pamphlet entitled "The People's Rights Reclaimed," from the pen of one of our most respectable and intelligent citizens; in which the unconstitutionality of the law is demonstrated beyond even the possibility of cavil. Fanaticism, as is usual in all cases where a beneficial reform is introduced, has opened the floodgates of abuse against the revisers of the law, for recommending the alteration. But let them rail on. The time is past when the anathemas of churchmen intimidated legislators. A ray of light has burst forth too refulgent to be extinguished, or even impeded, by the efforts of bigots. When the mind is bent on acquiring knowledge, nothing can restrain its energies. It never can stop until all its inquiries are satisfied; nor is it possible for it to retrograde. We live in too enlightened an age to fear either the denunciations or the influence of a hireling and corrupt priesthood.

Joint Stock Book Company.—It has been suggested by those friendly to the establishment of this association, that, instead of publishing a prospectus of the plan, a meeting should be called, and a committee at once appointed, to form the necessary rules and regulations. All, therefore, who feel disposed to become subscribers, are requested, *as early as possible*, to signify their intention to the editor of the *Correspondent*, that means may be taken to carry the plan into effect. The great object contemplated is, the obtaining at the *original cost* such books as have been written with a view to human improvement, and that cannot be obtained but at a price beyond the means of individuals. As the company can proceed with a sum of money equal to the printing of an edition of a single book, and advantageously use any sum that can be accumulated, it is not necessary to fix on any capital. It is proposed to make the shares ten dollars each.

Defaulters.—We are almost ashamed to state, that a great proportion of our subscribers are in arrear of the current half year's subscription for our paper. They cannot but be aware, that the existence of the *Correspondent* depends entirely on the *prompt* aid of the friends of liberal principles, and that, where this is withheld, it bespeaks a lukewarmness in the cause utterly unworthy of its adherents. No professions of support can be considered sincere unless followed by corresponding actions; and it cannot be expected of us to continue furnishing our paper, when those who receive it do not comply with the conditions on which it is published.

Morning Lecture.—The Secretary of the *Free Press Association* will deliver a Lecture on Sunday the 21st instant in the Military Hall, Sixth Avenue, Greenwich, at 10 o'clock A. M. The Lecture in the Temple of Arts, William street, at half past 2 o'clock, as usual.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Origin of Fables.—Is it not very natural, that all the various metamorphoses with which the earth may be said to be covered, should have led the orientals, whose imagination is so luxuriant, to imagine that our souls passed from one body to another? An almost imperceptible point grows to be a worm, and this worm becomes a butterfly; an acorn changes to an oak, an egg to a bird; water becomes clouds and thunder; wood is turned into fire and ashes: in a word, all Nature is more or less metamorphosis. Souls being accounted tenous forms, were soon concluded to partake of that property, which was sensibly seen in more dense and heavy bodies. The metempsychosis is, perhaps, the most ancient doctrine in the known world, and still prevails in a great part of India and China. It is likewise very natural that those ancient fables collected and embellished by Ovid, in his admirable work, took their rise from the several metamorphoses with which our eyes are conversant. The very Jews have not been without their metamorphoses. If Niobe was changed into marble, Hedith, Lot's wife, was turned into salt. As Eurydice was detained in hell for looking back, a like indiscretion cost Lot's wife her human nature. The country town in Phrygia, where lived the hospitable Baucis and Philemon, is changed into a lake; the same submersion has befallen Sodom. Arius's daughters turned water into oil; the scripture mentions a change something similar. Cadmus was turned into a serpent, and the like was seen in Aaron's rod. The pagan deities very often assumed a human disguise; and when angels appeared to the Jews, it was always as men; with Abraham they partook of a repast. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, says that the messenger of Satan cuffed him.

Church.—There are various kinds of churches; for instance, the Greek church, the protestant church, the church of Geneva, and the Lutheran church. Figuratively it implies that mixed multitude of bishops, deans, canons, prebendaries, and priests, who, under the protection of the state, fare sumptuously of the good things of this world, and expatiate to others on the joys of the next. *Church*, in a corporeal sense, is a large stone or brick building, usually in the form of a cross, with a steeple and weathercock, where poor people and others assemble weekly to receive spiritual instruction.

The church was throughout Europe, in former times, the scene of the most striking events, and the mart of all the passions: there, misery took refuge, and crime found asylum; there, vengeance raised her dagger even at the altar's steps, and love spread its wiles amidst shrines and crucifixes. It was in the church of Canterbury that Thomas à Becket was murdered: it was in the church of Boun Convento that the emperor Henry VII. was poisoned in the *Eucharist*: it was in the Duomo of Florence that the Pazzi, urged by the public and private wrongs, aimed at the lives of the two Medici, and destroyed the feeblest: it was in the church of St. Clair, at Avignon, that Petrarch first fell a victim to Laura's charms, and

that his imagination imbibed the colors of her drapery, until his eyes saw every object tinged with the "green and violet," (*"Negliocchi ho pur le violette e il verde :"*) it was in the church of St. Lorenza, at Naples, that Boccaccio first beheld his beautiful Fiametta gliding along in her sacred dress of penitence, on the morning of a Holy Saturday, and had his fate decided on the Easter Sunday, when he beheld her at "*la grande festa*," all radiant in vestment as in beauty: it was in the church that the *Betsy Thoughtlesses*, and the *Harriets*, and *Clarissas*, always did most mischief in former days in England; and, according to the "*Spectator*," that all the idleness, vanity, and intrigue of the fashionables of his day were exhibited!

St. Peter's Chair.—The sacrilegious curiosity of the French broke through all obstacles to their seeing the chair of St. Peter. They actually removed its superb casket, and discovered the relic. Upon its mouldering and dusty surface were traced carvings, which bore the appearance of letters. The chair was quickly brought into a better light, the dust and cobwebs removed, and the inscription (for an inscription it was) faithfully copied. The writing was in Arabic characters, and is the well known confession of the Mahometan faith—"There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet." It is supposed that this chair had been, among the spoils of the crusaders, offered to the church at a time when the taste for antiquarian lore, and the decyphering of inscriptions, were not yet in fashion. This story has been since hushed up, the chair replaced, and none but the unhallowed remember the fact, and none but the audacious repeat it. Yet such there are even at Rome!

Removal.—The office of the *Correspondent* is removed to No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library, where all orders and communications are requested to be forwarded.

Printing in all its branches, also *Bookbinding*, neatly and expeditiously executed on the most reasonable terms.

The following publications may be had as above:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath Day—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, Lond. ed., 2 vols. in one—\$1.25.

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THE CORRESPONDENT is published at No. 15 Chamber street. Terms, three dollars per annum, payable in advance.—GEORGE H. EVANS & CO., Printers, 254 Greenwich st.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 14.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 27, 1827.

Vol. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH.

Mr. Editor—I am much pleased with the manner in which your able correspondent *Philo Veritas* has replied to the editor of the *Antidote*; a paper evidently got up by some ignorant fanatic who imagines that ranting is sound criticism, and that because the bulk of mankind have hitherto allowed themselves to be duped by interested cheats, they are always to remain the vassals of the church. Desirous of contributing my mite to “fix at once the character of fraud, ignorance, and disregard to truth, that so conspicuously marks the writer in the *Antidote*,” I enclose you, for publication, several objections that appear to me to invalidate the authenticity of the books attributed to Moses; to confirm the fact asserted by *Philo Veritas*, that they are full of anachronisms; and that they are the compilation of some unknown person—unknown as to the country where he lived, his name, age, and profession.

The objections I propose to make to these books are not entirely my own: I find them partly in the *Tractatus Theologico Politicus* of Spinoza; partly in the *Dubia Evangelica* of Spanheim; partly in the *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament* of Pere Simon; and partly in the first volume of *Recherches Nouvelles sur l'Histoire Ancienne*, to which I am (in part) indebted. I have penned these objections with the Bible before me; and I have taken care to verify, by reference to that book, the facts stated. Of the conclusions from these facts, the reader must judge for himself. I present them not for the purpose of needless disputation; but in sincere and anxious desire to discover truth, if I can, and to defend what appears to me, after laborious investigation, deserving of that name.

In the 49th chapter of Genesis, an account is given, at considerable length, of the ultimate fate of the twelve tribes of Israel, of which Moses could know nothing. The 10th verse, in particular, says, “the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” Now Moses could not know that the Jews were ever ruled by a sceptre. Their first king was Saul, who commenced his reign several hundreds of years after the death of Moses. I know that this passage has been turned into a prophecy of the coming of Jesus of Nazareth. But it remains to be proved that the word Shiloh signifies Jesus, and could apply to no one else. Besides, it is not true that the sceptre was wielded by the tribe of Judah at the time Jesus is said to have appeared; for long before that period the Jews had submitted to the Romans. They had also, before that, been in captivity to the Assyrians for 70 years, during which it can-

not be pretended that a vestige of royalty remained in Judah, or in any other of the tribes. It follows, therefore, that this part of the book of Genesis must have been written by some person after the fact was known that the Jews had been governed by kings.

Again, in the 36th chapter of Genesis, ver. 31, it is said, "And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom *before there reigned any king over the children of Israel*. The writer, therefore, lived after kings were common in Israel.

Genesis, 14 and 14, it is said, "Abraham pursued them to *Dan*." Now there was no place named Dan till the time of the Judges. The tribe of Dan having surprised and destroyed Laish, they built a city and called it Dan. Judges, 18, and 27—29. This passage, therefore, was not written till after the time of the Judges.

In the 23d chapter of Genesis, ver. 29, it is said, "And after this Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah: *the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan*." In the 48th chapter, ver. 7, we have these words, "And as for me, when I came from Paden, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come into Ephrath; and I buried her in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem." It is well known that Moses never set a foot on the land of Canaan, but only perceived it at a distance from a mountain or height in the wilderness. He could not, therefore, be acquainted with Ephrath, Hebron, or Bethlehem, places that were only known by the Jews subsequent to their obtaining possession of the country occupied by the Canaanites. The least attention to the phraseology of the language of these two passages must convince any one, that the writer of them was intimately acquainted with the locality of the places of which he was speaking; and, therefore, must have lived after the time of Moses. We find this fact, indeed, put beyond the possibility of dispute as to the place called *Hebron*, on turning to the 15th chapter of the book of Joshua, in which an account is given of portioning out the land of Canaan, after the Jews had conquered it. At ver. 15, it is said; "And Joshua blessed him and gave unto Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, *Hebron* for an inheritance. Hebron, therefore, became the inheritance of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, *unto this day*, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel. *And the name of Hebron before, was Kijath-arba*, which Arba was a great man among the Anakims. And the land had rest from war." But this passage of Joshua not only proves that Hebron was not designated by that name until after the time of Moses, but the words "*unto this day*" show clearly that the writer must have lived at a period considerably remote from that even in which Joshua lived. This is farther corroborated by what is said in Genesis, 12th and 6th. "And Abraham passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plains of Moreh. And the Canaanite with them in the land. The original and elder versions have it, "And the Canaanite *was there* in the land;" Now the Canaanites were not driven out till the time of Joshua. It is, therefore, evident that the writer lived *after* the Canaanites were driven out.

But the matter does not rest here. Deuteronomy, 13th, 5th and 6th, it is said, "Moses the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, ac-

cording to the word of the Lord; and he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre *unto this day.*" It requires no argument to show that Moses could not have written the account of his own death and burial. Nor are the words "this day," which, as I have already said, imply the elapse of a considerable time between the event narrated and the narration, to be here considered a solitary passage that might have been interpolated at the end of the book; for it is so often repeated that it is interwoven with the book itself. It occurs in chap. 3d, ver. 14; also in Genesis, 22d and 14.

Deuteronomy, 34 and 10, "And there arose not a *prophet* since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. In Samuel, 9 and 9, it is said, "Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come and let us go to the *seer*; for he that is now called a prophet, was beforetime called a *seer.*" This appellation of *seer* continued till after the time of David, who calls God *seer*, not prophet. Now as Moses, throughout the Pentateuch, is called prophet, and not *seer*, the Pentateuch must have been written by some one accustomed to the term prophet, after *seer* had gone out of use—that is, after the time of David.

In Genesis, 22 and 15, we are told, "Abraham called the name of that place *Jehovah Jireh*; as is said to this day, in the moment of the Lord it shall be seen." Also, in the 4th chap., ver. 26, "Then men began to call upon the name of *Jehovah.*" But in Exodus, 6th and 2d, it is written, "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by the name of *Jehovah* *was I not known to them.*"

It is evident from these conflicting statements that the books of Genesis and Exodus must have been the work of two different writers, unless we are to suppose that when the person who wrote both was composing Exodus, he had forgotten what he had said in Genesis. In that case, his statements being contradictory, destroy each other.

In Deuteronomy, 2d and 12th, it is said, "The Horims also dwelt in Seir aforetime, but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them before them, and dwelt in their stead, *as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the Lord gave unto them.*" But Israel did not dwell in the land of his possession which the Lord had given him, until after the victories of Joshua. The writer, therefore, lived when Israel was in peaceable possession of what *had been* the land of Canaan.

To be continued.

HISTORY OF SAMUEL.

Continued from page 195.

The God whom the Jews described as hardening the hearts of men in order to destroy them; as sending them wicked spirits to disorder their reason; as exterminating a whole people, and as causing a king to be cut in pieces for an event which happened 400 years before—This God, I say, can he be considered as the same whom the Christians adore, and the Europeans of the 19th century, of the era called of grace, of charity, and

of light? In other words, did the ancient Hebrews or Jews form the same ideas of the Divinity as the present Europeans do?

Must we regard the opinions of ancient nations, no matter on what subject, as obligatory upon those of modern times? And, if by public right an individual cannot bind another either in his actions or his thoughts, can we admit that a generation which was not born, is bound in mind and sensations by the deed of a generation that is past, the very language of which is even an enigma?

If in any country, by any code of justice, the most simple fact is not admitted as true, or even apparent, by less than two witnesses, can we admit incredible facts, without any other witness than their actor or narrator, who is necessarily partial?

If in any country, if by any code of justice, it is not permitted to an individual to constitute himself, for the least civil act, the representative of another person, without exhibiting a positive title of authority of that person, can we admit, without the most strict inquest, the pretensions of the first upstart who asserts and constitutes himself the representative of God—the bearer of his word?

Can we hope any peace among men, any practice of justice in societies, while it shall be permitted to individuals to arrogate to themselves, to confer, to guarantee upon one another the faculty of representing God, of giving out his wishes, of interpreting his intentions? Is not every action of this kind an assumption of absolute power, the first step to despotism and tyranny?

Are not all associations founded upon this principle of representation or divine authorization, permanent conspiracies against the natural rights of man, against the equality and liberty of citizens, against the authority of governments?

If among the Jews the establishment of a royalty and a king, as the history says, was a thing contrary to the will of God, does it not follow, that, instead of being a divine right, royalty is but the invention of man, a rebellion of the people against God, and that the only holy and sacred government is that of God through the priests?

If God with his omnipotence could not in a breath exterminate the little nation of Jews, or change their hearts by sending a good spirit, but preferred to submit to force, and condescended to their wills, have we not a right to conclude that the Divinity regards as something the will of the people, and that no power has a right to despise it?

In admitting that Samuel was not a knavish usurper; in admitting that the installation of Saul was binding in consequence of the assent of the people, does it not follow that the clandestine choice of David, made without any authority or knowledge of this same people, was an illegal act, contrary to all public right; and that the reign of all the dynasty of David is thence tainted with usurpation?

If, in the Jewish system, the anointing applied to David by Samuel had a divine indelible character, why, after the death of that priest, and that of Saul the son of Jesse, was it necessary to assemble the ancients, (seniors and senators,) first of Judah, then of all Israel, to anoint him publicly and solemnly?

If, as it appears, the ceremony of the moderns is in imitation of the ancients, and that the anointing of Saul and David by Samuel was done in private and not in presence of the people, what right has the gaud almoner or other priests to render it public?

If among the Jews the holiness by anointing was the transferring of the sacerdotal character upon the head of a king, does a modern king who is consecrated participate his power with the priesthood?

If a king recognises in the priesthood any right to consecrate today, does he not recognise the same right to consecrate some one else to-morrow, as Samuel did?

By what right can any individual consecrate a king? Does this right come from the bishop of Rome? The king of France, then, is a vassal of a foreign prince. Is this right granted to the priest by the king himself? The king gives himself then his rights. Whence does he derive them? Is it from the law? Who made it? Himself, or the people? Or is the law a mutual agreement between the two powers? Is it not rather military power? Take care—out of the constitution, all is put in question, all becomes precarious and dangerous.

If a consecration is an affair of state, why is it purely arbitrary? If it is a ceremony for amusement, why make the people pay more than for any other? If it is a pious ceremony, why make more fuss about it than to wash the feet of the poor, or touch their sores? When all the morals of the evangelists point to humility and simplicity, why is the practice nothing but pomp and dissipation?

A worthy and curious appendage to this history of the priest Samuel would be that of his pupil, the shepherd David, afterwards king. Several years since, an essay of this kind was published in London, called "The History of the Man after God's own Heart." The author has very well seized the character of the man; and it only requires to read, without prejudice, the book of the Jews, to know him by the recitation of his actions. But the anonymous author did not well understand how to analyse the motives which directed David in most of his actions, which would have been the most interesting. We should see there one of the most artful, the most subtle Machiavelists of antiquity. We should see that ancient Asia knew and practised the refined art of tyranny, long before the perverse modern Italy taught its precepts. In point of military talents, and of political cunning, there is a striking resemblance between the Hebrew David and the Carthaginian Hannibal; both spoke the same language; were reared in the same national usages, and in the same principles of morals. Among the moderns, the best copy of the Hebrew king is the first Christian king of the Franks, Clovis, such as he is painted by a poet in a tragedy, which is a historical portrait.

Another picture would be that of the adulterous son of David; that Solomon so celebrated for wisdom. It may be remarked, that all that travellers worthy of credit have made known for some time past of the administration of the pacha of Egypt, Mehemet Ali, answers exactly to what we are told of Solomon. Like this king, the Turkish pacha has concentrated in himself the interior and foreign commerce of all his people. He alone buys and sells the corn, the rice, the sugars, all the provisions which Egypt produces. He alone receives from abroad the coffee,

the cloths, the merchandize of all kinds, which he sells out to his people. He has, like Solomon, in his harem several hundred women, and stables of many thousand horses. So that, compared in all things, the pacha Mehemet Ali is a Solomon, and Solomon was a pacha Mehemet Ali. Travellers add, also, that for a long while Egypt has not been more unhappy, vexed, and oppressed with more cunning and wickedness. The Jewish historians do not conceal the fact, that after the death of Solomon, the people were so discontented and irritated, that, not being able to obtain from his son the relief they demanded, they rose in revolt and rejected the dynasty for a king more moderate. The wisdom of Solomon bore the same name in Hebrew as that which the pacha of Egypt used in wishing to oppress the Hebrews. Let us oppress them, says he, with wisdom. [Be-bekmah is wrongly translated; the true meaning is contrivance, cunning, and skill of power.] But Solomon built a magnificent temple, where were lodged and richly clothed numerous priests; and these priests were his historians. Thus it has also been with the monks in the history of the French kings of the first, and even of the second race.

We have thus seen an orphan boy raise himself by his abilities and subterfuges, by taking advantage of the superstitions and prejudices of a nation, to the first office of power and trust among this Hebrew people; and when, in consequence of malpractices, that power was threatened to be prostrated, by means of cunning and an impudent pretension to an intercourse with a supposed omnipotent being, and assuming his authority, choosing first a substitute, but retaining for a time all the influence over him which superstitious dread gives the priesthood over the human mind. Finding, however, the man he had chosen possessed more independent spirit than he at first anticipated, and that, in consequence of his services to his country, he had obtained more popularity than he even with his divine character could overcome; or, at any rate, than he dared risk to oppose openly, he resorted to a subterfuge: he clandestinely set up a rival who might take upon himself the risk of revolt and opposition; a man whose history throughout exhibits, with much talent and ability, a character of hypocrisy, sensuality, and cruelty that would expel any man at the present time from society; a man who, in abandoning himself to his passions, showed a total dereliction from all moral principle; but whose vices are screened under the appellation of "the man after God's own heart." Now, which of these three personages will bear the test of examination? Which of them was the best? Samuel, Saul, or David; the sanctified judge and prophet, the outcast king approved by the people, or the unprincipled rebel and usurper? With the exception of the massacre of the Amalekites, in which, however, he was guided by Samuel, and where the man of war showed more humanity than the man of God, Saul's actions cannot by any means be viewed in so bad a light as those of the usurper judge, and the nobler king. Saul, though subject to frequent and violent gusts of passion, was still open to feelings of humanity and to reason. Samuel was a cool and calculating impostor and mountebank. His knavery was deliberate, and sheltered behind the ignorance, the fears, and the prejudice of those minds whom he tyrannized over. As to David, it requires but a perusal of his history to rank him in point of integrity and honesty far behind Saul. But the whole three, supposing

the historical parts to be true, do no honor to the choice of an omniscient God; and the whole history, in point of utility, is of no importance to mankind. It establishes no useful principle in science, in the arts, or in morals. The latter can never be improved by a recapitulation of scenes of villany, hypocrisy, and bloodshed, especially when pretended to be sanctioned by the ruler of the universe.

THE QUESTIONS OF ZAPATA.

From the French of Voltaire.

Continued from page 200.

33. Ought I to affirm or deny, that the Jewish laws nowhere announce punishments and rewards after death? How comes it to pass that neither Moses nor Joshua have spoken of the immortality of the soul, a dogma known by the Chaldeans, the Persians, and the Greeks; a dogma which was not at all in vogue among the Jews till after the time of Alexander, and which was always rejected by the Sadducees, because not found in the Pentateuch.

34. What coloring shall I give to the history of the Levite who, having arrived upon his ass at Gaba, a town belonging to the Benjamites, became the object of an unnatural passion to the Gabaonites? It appears he gave up his wife to them, whom they abused the whole night long, which violence was the cause of her death on the following day.

35. I have much need of your instruction in order to comprehend this verse of the 19th chapter of Judges: "*The Lord accompanied Judah, and he got possession of the mountains, but he could not defeat the inhabitants of the valley because they had a great number of chariots armed with scythes.*" I cannot comprehend by the feeble light within me, how the God of heaven and earth, who had so often changed the order of Nature, and suspended her eternal laws in favor of the Jewish people, could not contrive to vanquish the inhabitants of a little valley, because they were in possession of armed chariots. Can it be true, as many learned men pretend, that the Jews regarded their God as a local divinity and protector, who was at one time more, and at another time less powerful than the God of their enemies? As respects this opinion, is it not confirmed by this reply of Jephtha: "*You possess what your god Chamos has given you; permit us then to take that which our god Adonai has promised us.*"

36. I must also add, that it is difficult to believe there were so many armed chariots in a mountainous country, where, according to the accounts given in many places of scripture, it was considered great magnificence to be mounted upon an ass.

37. The history of Ehud involves me in still greater difficulties. I perceive the Jews almost continually in slavery, notwithstanding the assistance of their Deity, who had bound himself by oath to give them all that country which lies between the Nile, the sea, and the Euphrates. They had been for eighteen years the subjects of a petit king named Eglon, when God caused Ehud the son of Gera to arise in their favor, who could use his left hand with the same facility as his right. Ehud, the son of Gera, having procured a poinard with two sharp edges, concealed it under

his garment, just as Jacques Clement and Ravallac have since contrived to do. He demanded a private audience of the king, saying he had a secret of great importance to communicate from the Deity. Eglon rose up respectfully, and Ehud with his left hand thrust the poniard into the king's belly. God favored the whole of this business, which, according to the moral sense of all the nations of the earth, appears to be rather barbarous. Inform me which is the murder most divine, that perpetrated by *St. Ehud*, or that by *St. David*, who caused the cuckold *Uriah* to be assassinated, or that by the blessed *Solomon*, who, having seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, put to death his brother, *Adonias*, because he asked him for one of them?

38. I beg of you to inform me by what means Sampson was enabled to take the three hundred foxes, tie them together by the tails, and attach firebrands to their posteriors, in order to set fire to the corps of the Philistines. Foxes are very seldom found but in woody countries. There were no forests in the district, and it seems to be rather a difficult affair to take three hundred of these animals alive, and fasten them together by their tails. It is said also that he slew a thousand Philistines with the jaw bone of an ass, and that from one of the teeth sockets there issued a fountain of water, of which he drank to refresh himself after his Herculean labors. When the question relates to *asses' jaw bones* and their appendant *cascades*, some éclaircissements are undoubtedly necessary.

39. I request that you will also give me your instructions respecting the good man Tobit, who, sleeping with his eyes open, was rendered blind by the dung that fell from a swallow; also as respects the angel who descended from what is called the imperial heaven, especially for the purpose of going along with Tobit, jun. to the Jew Gabael, to demand of him the money that was owing to Tobit, sen.; also as regards the wife of Tobit, jun., who had had seven husbands, all of whom were strangled by the devil; as well as upon the method that was taken to restore the sight of the blind with a fish's gall. These histories are certainly curious, and, after the Spanish romances, there can be nothing more worthy of our attention: the only histories that will bear a comparison with them are those of Judith and Esther. But how shall I be able to interpret properly the sacred text, which informs us that the charming Judith was a descendant of Simeon the son of Reuben, although, according to the same sacred text, which cannot record a falsehood, Simeon is represented as the brother of Reuben?

I am much in love with Esther, and I allow the supposed king Ahasuerus to have acted very sensibly by espousing a Jewess, and laying with her for six months, without having the least knowledge of her family or connexions: and as all the rest appears to be equally consistent, you will not, I beg, withhold from me your assistance in this business, since you are possessed of such superior wisdom.

40. I have need of your aid in the book of Kings full as much as in that of Judges, Tobit and his dog, Esther, Judith, Ruth, &c. When Saul was declared king, the Jews were slaves to the Philistines. Their conquerors did not permit them to be possessed of swords nor lances; they were even obliged to apply to the Philistines when it was requisite to have their ploughshares or their axes repaired. However, notwithstanding

this, Saul gave battle to the Philistines and obtained the victory: and in this battle he is represented as being at the head of three hundred and thirty thousand soldiers, in a little territory that was not capable of furnishing subsistence for thirty thousand souls: for at that period he did not possess at the most more than one third of the holy land: and the whole of this barren country, at the present day, cannot maintain more than twenty thousand inhabitants; the surplus being necessitated to gain a livelihood as agents or brokers in the distant cities of Balk, Damascus, Tyre, Babylon, &c.

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE EIGHTH.

In our examination of the three first chapters of Genesis, I have but slightly alluded to those personages called *angels*, who are made to play so conspicuous a part in the Jewish as well as the Christian drama. These "intelligences," as they are sometimes denominated, are first introduced to our notice as military centinels, with flaming swords in their hands, under the name of *cherubims*, placed by God himself to guard the tree of life, lest Adam and Eve, after being driven from paradise, should have tasted of it, and acquired immortality. Although nothing is said in the Pentateuch, or five books attributed to Moses, respecting the *fall of the angels*, it is on this dogma that the Christian religion is founded. Those of them who rebelled, were compelled to leave heaven, and to take up their abode in a place called hell; where, having become devils, one of them assumed the form of a serpent, tempted Eve, and thus damned the whole human race.

The first notice we have of angels possessing distinguishing names is in the book of Job, written, as we have already shown, by a Chaldean, and as to the contents of which the Jews knew nothing until the Babylonish captivity. It was then, and not till then, that they learned the names of Gabriel, Raphael, Michael, Uriel, &c., which the Chaldeans, at that time a powerful nation, gave to the good angels, and Asmodeus, Satan, &c. to the bad.

To counteract the effect, so fatal to the antiquity of their sacred books, arising from the fact of their having acquired all their knowledge from the conquerors, the Jews pretended that the dogma of the fallen angels—their war against God, their defeat, their precipitation into hell, and their hatred to mankind—was taught in a book since acknowledged to be *apocryphal*, said to have been written by Enoch, who is stated, in the Bible, to have lived in the seventh generation before the deluge. According to the Jews, Enoch wrote as follows:

"It happened, after the sons of men had multiplied in those days, that daughters were born to them, elegant and beautiful. And when the angels, the sons of heaven, beheld them, they became enamored of them,

saying to each other, Come, let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men, and let us beget children. Then their leader, Samyaza, said to them, I fear that you may, perhaps, be indisposed to the performance of this enterprize; and that Jalona shall suffer for so grievous a crime. But they answered him and said, We all swear, and bind ourselves by mutual execrations, that we will not change our intention, but execute our projected undertaking. Then they swore altogether, and bound themselves by mutual execrations. Their whole number was 200, who descended upon Ardis, which is the top of Mount Armon."

The writer, after enumerating the names of the chiefs or prefects of these 200 angels, adds, "Then they took wives, each choosing for himself, whom they began to approach, and with whom they cohabited—teaching them sorcery, incantations, and the dividing of roots and trees. And the women conceiving, brought forth giants, whose stature was each 300 cubits," &c.

It is evident that this story is the same as that told in the 6th chapter of Genesis about the coupling of angels with the daughters of men, and the race of giants which sprung from this union. But there is nothing either in the book of Enoch, the book of Genesis, or any other part of the Bible, about a war in heaven, or the other legends respecting the discomfiture of angels, which Christians, nevertheless, now regard as fundamental doctrines of their religion.

It is admitted by most of the commentators of the Old Testament, that the Jews had no names for their angels before the captivity. The one that appeared to Manoah, father of Sampson, would not tell his name. The three who were regaled by Abraham with a kid also refused to tell their names. Even Moses knew nothing of them; and it was not till the time of the captivity that we find Tobit calling one of them Raphael.

As to the three angels whom Abraham entertained—one of whom told their host that he would come again the following year, and that Sarah, in her old age, should have a child—Calmet, in commenting on the Bible, says that this story has a great affinity to the fable related by Ovid of Jupiter, Neptune, and Mercury, who, having supped with old Hyreus, and finding that he was afflicted with impotence, urined on the skin of a calf which he had served up to them, and ordered him to bury this hide, watered with celestial urine, in the ground, and leave it there for nine months. At the end of this period, Hyreus uncovered his hide, and found in it a child, which was named *Orion*, and is now in the heavens. Calmet adds, that the words which the angels used to Abraham may be rendered thus—"A child shall be born of your calf."

We have already distinctly traced the legend of the serpent that beguiled the woman, and the recovery of the human race by a personage, born of a virgin, possessing all the characteristics and resemblances of the Christian Jesus, to the Persian and Brahman mythology. If we again turn to the sacred books of these nations, we shall be equally satisfied that they alone were the source whence the Jews and Christians derived their ideas of angels.

The Persians, according to Dr. Hyde, had thirty-one angels. The first of all, who is served by four other angels, is named *Bahaman*.

He has the inspection of all animals except man, over whom God has reserved to himself an immediate jurisdiction. The second angel presides over the seventh day, and is called *Debadur*. The third is *Kur*, which, probably, was afterward converted into *Cyrus*: he is the angel of the sun. The fourth is called *Mah*, and presides over the moon. Thus each angel has his province. It was among the Persians that the doctrine of the guardian angel, and the evil angel, was first adopted. It is believed that Raphael was the guardian angel of the Persian empire. They considered Satan to be an angel or genius, who had made war upon the *Dives* and the *Peris*—that is, the fairies of the east.

Again, the sacred book of the Brahmins, called the *Shastah*, to which they assign a high antiquity, contains five chapters—the *first*, relating to God and his attributes—the *second*, on the creation of angels—the *third*, on the fall of angels—the *fourth*, their punishment—and the *fifth*, their pardon and the creation of man. Holwell, an Englishman, who lived 30 years at Benares on the Ganges, an ancient school of the Brahmins, for the purpose of acquiring a knowledge of the sacred Sanscrit tongue, gives a distinct translation of these five chapters. Of the angels, the *Shastah*, or *Shaster*, says,

“The Eternal, absorbed in the contemplation of his own existence, resolved, in the fulness of time, to communicate his glory and essence to beings capable of feeling and partaking his beatitude, as well as of contributing to his glory. The Eternal willed it, and they were. He formed them partly of his own essence, capable of perfection or imperfection, according to their will. The Eternal first created Brahma, Vishna, and Siva; then Mozazor, and all the multitude of the angels. Brahma was the prince of the angelic army; Vishna and Siva were his coadjutors. The Eternal divided the angelic army into several bands, and gave to each a chief. They adored the Eternal, ranged around his throne, each in the degree assigned him. There was harmony in heaven. Mozazor, chief of the first band, led the canticle of praise and adoration to the creator, and the song of obedience to Brahma, his first creature; and the Eternal rejoiced in his new creation.

“From the creation of the celestial army, joy and harmony surrounded the throne of the Eternal for a thousand years multiplied by a thousand, and would have lasted until the end of time had not envy seized Mozazor and other princes of the angelic bands, among whom was Raabon, the next in dignity to Mozazor. Forgetful of the blessing of their creation, and of their duty, they rejected the power of perfection, and exercised the power of imperfection. They did evil in the sight of the Eternal; they disobeyed him; they refused to submit to God’s lieutenant, and his coadjutors Vishna and Siva, saying, We will govern! and, without fearing the power and anger of their creator, disseminated their seditious principles in the celestial army. They seduced the angels, and persuaded a great number of them to rebel; and they forsook the throne of the Eternal; and sorrow came upon the faithful angelic spirits; and, for the first time, grief was known in heaven.

“The Eternal, whose omniscience, prescience, and influence extend over all things, except the actions of the beings whom he has created free, beheld with grief and anger the defection of Mozazor, Raabon, and the

other chiefs of the angels. Merciful in his wrath, he sent Brahma, Vishna, and Siva to reproach them with their crime, and bring them back to their duty; but, confirmed in their spirit of independence, they persisted in their revolt. The Eternal then commanded Siva to march against them, armed with Almighty power, and hurl them down from the high place to the place of *darkness*, into the *Ondera*—there to be punished for a thousand years multiplied by a thousand.

“At the end of a thousand years, Brahma, Vishna, and Siva implored the clemency of the Eternal in favor of the delinquents. The Eternal vouchsafed to deliver them from the prison of the *Ondera*, and place them in a state of probation during a great number of solar revolutions. There were other rebellions against God during this time of penitence. It was at one of these periods God created the earth, where the penitent angels underwent several metamorphoses, one of the last of which was their transformation into cows. Hence it was that cows became sacred in India. Lastly, they were metamorphosed into men.”

To be continued.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Agnes Morton.—The following is an appalling specimen of religious persecution, during the early stages of the reformation in England. It is from the pen of the author of the *Lollards*. The scene was in Smithfield, where so many other victims to a savage superstition met a similar fate:

“A chair was brought, in which Agnes was permitted to seat herself, and then Dr. Shaxton, who had accompanied the sheriffs, passed to the pulpit. He preached of mercy and repentance, but withal enforced the necessity of firmly performing the solemn duty imposed on the guardians of Christ's church, by extirpating those whose wilful obstinacy tended, not only to their own perdition, but also to the undoing of millions, who, were it not for them, would be ‘safely gathered into the fold of the good shepherd.’ Agnes listened attentively to his discourse: to those parts which seemed to her in accordance with the scriptures, she bowed assent; but when some of the tenets of the catholic faith were insisted upon, she shook her head, or breathed her conviction that *there* was displayed the vain bigotry of Rome.

“The sermon ended. It was intimated to her that, having heard the cogent and unanswerable reasonings of a learned doctor, well calculated to dispel the errors into which she had been betrayed, if she had happily so profited by his labors as to be content to yield her opinion, her pardon, already signed, should be forthwith given into her hands. To this she replied, that, having been guilty of no crime against religion, she could profess no repentance. The grand charge against Agnes was, that she had denied the real presence of the Deity in the bread used for the sacrament. Her opinion she again defended. The bread so used, if put away for a time, would become mouldy; and this she urged as a proof that it could not be God. When reminded of the words of the Saviour declaring it to be his flesh, she insisted that his language was

figurative; as when stating that he would raise the temple again in three days, he had spoken of the temple of his body.

"In vain the churchman argued—in vain the lover prayed—the martyr was resolute. The executioner bound Agnes to the stake. He deposited a bag of powder on either side of the victim. The wood was piled around the sufferer, reaching up to her neck. One of the sheriffs drew near, and again required her to renounce her errors. 'My errors,' said Agnes, 'I have already renounced, and therefore am I brought to this.' 'She refuses pardon!' cried the sheriff. The bishops looked at each other in astonishment, and with apparent horror, in which the chief magistrate fully participated; the latter then proceeded to give the last awful command. 'Enough,' said he, 'has been done for mercy. Now'—he paused for a second, to give more impressive force to the mandate which was to follow—'now, *Fiat Justitia!*' Prompt to perform his dreadful task, that instant saw the executioner apply the lighted torch to the straw and tarred shavings, which formed the base of the pile prepared for the immolation of Agnes. The crackling flame rose rapidly, and completely encircled the sufferer. Her hair was in a blaze, and her face, already scorched, presented a frightful contrast to what it had lately been. It was now veiled by the ascending smoke, and then displayed by the vivid light which succeeded. Amid the roar of increasing fire, the accents of thankfulness and prayer were heard to ascend. The powder exploded, and enveloped her in its frightful glare, but it had not the effect of extinguishing life. She continued aloud her appeal to the Deity.

"Withdrawing her thoughts for a moment from prayer, Agnes thought of her lover. 'I feel it not,' she exclaimed; 'I am wonderfully sustained; now, Edwin, can you doubt?' 'That these are fiends—that you are a martyr? No: this constancy must be from heaven! A convert to thy faith, I pant but to follow thee, and die for the truth!' 'It is finished!' Agnes sighed. Her limbs were consumed: she sank, and ceased to exist!

Ceremony of Candlemas.—Bacon, in his "Reliques of Rome," ascribes this ceremony to a rite performed in pagan Rome in honor of Februa, mother of Mars. "Som tyme," saith he, "when the Romaines by great myght and royal power conquered all the world, they were so proude that they forgot God, and made them divers gods after their own lust. And so among all they had a god that they called Mars, that had been to fire a notable knyght in battayle . . . And for that they would speed the better of this knyght, the people prayed and did great worship to his mother, that was called Februa . . . The Romaines this night went about the city of Rome with torches and candles brenning (burning) in worship of this woman, &c. Then there was a pope, that was called Sergius, &c., he thought to undue this foule use and custom, and turn it to God's worship and our lady's, and gave commandment that all Christian people should come to church, and offer up a candle brenning, in the worship that they did to this woman Februa, and do worship to our lady, and to her sonne out Lord Jesus Christ."

St. Anthony and the Fishes.—St. Anthony preaching to the fishes is a subject handled by several of the great masters. There is a fine pic-

ture of this miracle in the Palarro Borghese, where the salmon looks at the preacher with an edified face, and a cod, with his upturned eyes, seems anxiously seeking for the new light. This remarkable sermon is to be had in many of the shops at Rome. Anthony addressed the fish, "Dearly beloved fish!" and the legend adds, that, at the conclusion of the discourse, the fish bowed to him 'with profound humility and a grave and religious countenance." The saint then gave the fish his blessing, who scudded away to make new conversions—the missionaries of the main. This adventure is not, however, singular: the fish paid a similar compliment to St. Francis, when he was rehearsing a sermon on the shores of Gaeta. The church of St. Anthony, at Rome, is painted in curious old frescoes, with the temptations of the saint. In one picture he is drawn blessing the devil, disguised in a cowl, probably at that time

When the devil was sick,
And the devil a monk would be.

The next picture shows that

When the devil was well,
The devil a monk was he:

for St. Anthony having laid down his coffin, "to meditate the more severely," a parcel of malicious imps are peeping, with all sorts of whimsical and terrific faces, over its edges, and pourtraying Hogarth's enraged musician. One abominable wretch blows a post horn close to the saint's ear, and seems as much delighted with his own music as a boy with a Jew's harp.

Jews.—During the period of the revival of letters there were no Jews in England, and Jewish books therefore escaped the effect of the hostile spirit which existed against them in other countries, at that period. But when Cromwell, on the soundest maxims of policy, permitted their return, at the solicitation of Menasseh Ben Israel, the outcry that was raised against the measure proved that the unfriendly feeling had not abated in the course of near four centuries. Cromwell was accused of being looked on as the Messiah by the Jews, and a visit paid by a wandering rabbi to Cambridge, in quest, as he said, of Hebrew MSS., was construed into a design of seeking in Huntingdonshire the genealogy of Oliver, for the purpose of tracing his pedigree to David. Prynne took a most active part in this clamor, and brought his ever ready pen to abuse the unfortunate Hebrews. His "Short Demurrer" is worthy of being read, because it contains a history of the cruel treatment which the Jews suffered in England, drawn from authentic records. It is written with his usual asperity of temper, silliness of argument, and accuracy of research. His hatred of the Jews makes him give ready credence to all the absurd stories of the middle ages against them, even so far as to swallow popish miracles, which, under other circumstances, he would have called anti-Christian; and he absolutely revels in describing cruelties, which disgraced the perpetrators as much as they injured the victims.

Modern Rome.—The spectacle of a great nation like Italy, deprived of its independence, bound in chains, and weighed down by a foreign yoke,

yet still existing in the midst of the dim and disjointed fragments of its former prowess and genius, is full of afflicting associations to the philosopher and the man. We have occasionally hoped, that the picture of the cowed and ermined vices of the eternal city was overcharged; but we are compelled to confess, that the evidence leaves us without the comparative happiness of a doubt. Rome at present exhibits a tragicomic spectacle, of mirth and misery, of ferocity and fun. The moral satirist, Juvenal, had not to lift the scourge against a stronger and more audacious phalanx of disgusting vices, and reckless profligacy, when the empire was corrupted by the misrule of madness and crime, clothed in the purple garb of unbounded power. One shrinks from the details of the loathsome mass of servility and heartlessness—of hypocrisy and sensuality—of baseness, knavery, and craft; and the whole rendered more hateful by the tinsel finery of the rags which cover it. Such is the effect of religion. Such are the results of enthroning on the prostrate altar of genius the accursed spirit of monastic bigotry, whose decalogue is written in blood; whose sceptre is ignorance; whose law is fraud; which smiles at the chains its dupes forge, and which hides, beneath the dark folds of its cross emblazoned mantle, the bloody poinard of the bravo, or the polluted bribe of the pimp.

A Soldier of the Church.—Few cities have been more conspicuous in the history of Germany than Magdeburg, though many have constantly played a greater part. Its complete destruction by the army of general Tilly, in the year 1631, is a blood stain, that, so long as Schiller's history of the thirty years' war shall be read, or Magdeburg remain, can never be erased, and that will always attest how much more cruel *religious* wars are than others. After a siege of six weeks by the army under Tilly, the city was taken by storm on the 10th of May, and the number of inhabitants was reduced in a few short hours, by the most horrid deaths, from 30,000 to 1,000: not a building was left standing except two churches, and a few small houses. Amidst the murdered bodies and the burning ruins, did this true soldier of the church collect his croats and his malloons in the cathedral, and there return in glorious song his solemn thanks to the benevolent Father of the beings he had been massacring, that the murder and the brand were completed! When some officers, whose names history has not preserved, came to Tilly, and requested him to put a stop to the carnage, he told them, "Come back in an hour, I will then see what is to be done; but the soldiers must have their reward for their labor and danger."

Religion in Germany.—In Hanover the reigning religion is the Lutheran. In some other parts of Germany, the catholic, or the Calvinistic mode of worship, are the most prevalent. In no part are sectaries numerous, and the only conspicuous sects more than those mentioned, are the Herrnhuters and the Jews. It is said that there are in the whole kingdom 1,060,000 Lutherans, 160,000 catholics, 90,000 Calvinists, 10,000 Jews, and 1000 Herrnhuters and Prennonites. Catholics are admitted to be members of the highest court of appeal in Hanover, and

may be generals or ministers of state. There is no law of exclusion. There is a pleasure in recording virtues, though they may not be our own, and the toleration which exists in Germany seems worthy of our imitation.

Religious Insanity.—It is not surprising that religion should so often produce insanity, for what can be a more gloomy idea, or one more likely to be constantly recurring, than to suppose that the happiness or misery of an infinity of time is depending on the actions of a few short years? The generality of those who profess religion think but very little of the matter; they are religious merely from habit, and thus escape the evils of fanaticism or real religion. If the existence of a future life, and of a heaven and hell, were as firmly believed in as the doctrine that all men must die, religious insanity would be as frequent as the headache.

A Laconic Sermon.—Job, c. 1, v. 21, "*Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.*" In discoursing from these words, I shall observe the three following things: First, man's ingress into the world; secondly, his progress through the world; and, thirdly, his egress out of the world. To return, first, man's ingress into the world is naked and bare; secondly, his progress through the world is trouble and care; and, thirdly, his egress out of the world is nobody knows where. To conclude, if we do well here, we shall be well there; and I could tell you no more were I to preach a whole year.

The pope conducts himself towards his heavenly master, as a knavish steward does to an earthly one. He says to the tenants, You may continue to neglect my master's interests as much as you please; but keep on good terms with me, and I will take care that you shall be on good terms with my master. *Lacon.*

Bigotry murders religion, to frighten fools with her ghost. *Lacon.*

The following publications may be had at the office of the *Correspondent*, No. 15 Chamber street:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

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View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

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MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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THE CATECHUMEN.

Mr. Editor—Inclosed you have a translation from the French of a little work of Voltaire's, entitled "*The Catechumen*," and purporting, on the title page of the original, printed at Amsterdam in the year 1768, to be a translation from the Chinese. As I think it is well calculated to expose the absurdities of what are called *Christian Mysteries*, I have to solicit for it a place in your valuable paper.

VARO.

Commercial affairs had engaged me to make a sea voyage. I had got far off from the shores of my native country, when a dreadful tempest threw me on an unknown coast; however, I fell into the hands of a very humane people, and soon found they had brought the arts to great perfection, that they practised many virtues, and appeared to me in a state as enlightened as humanity could attain. My admiration of them equalled my gratitude, but, alas! it is but too true, that man always discovers by some failing the weakness of his being.

These people showed as much friendship towards me as I could possibly do to them; their mildness and civility entirely gained my affection. They said to me one day, "Of what religion are you?" The question surprised me: I asked them if there were two religions? at which they smiled, and I saw they were astonished at my ignorance. They added, "Do you adore gods of wood, or metal, or of stone?" I shrugged up my shoulders, and they, with an air of satisfaction, continued, "Do you believe in Moses, who massacred thousands of his fellow citizens by the order of God?" I expressed indignation. They then demanded, if I were a disciple of Mahomet, who cut the moon in two, and concealed the half in his sleeve? I answered only by signs of contempt, which pleased them greatly.

"Are you a Christian?" they said to me at last. I answered, that I did not understand what they meant. They appeared much astonished, and observed, that they knew of but four kinds of religion in the world, and that I did not profess either. I replied, that I was born in a country where but one god of supreme intelligence and beneficence was worshipped, who created and governed the world, and who recompensed in another life the good acts that men do in this; that our worship consisted in gratitude and entire submission, and in the habitual exercise of the virtues; that is to say, of moderation, temperance, humanity, beneficence, and justice. "Is that all?" said they. I told them that the whole was included in those words. "How is that?" they remarked; "has your god

performed no miracles?" "He has created the heaven and the earth," I replied; "what would you have more?" "What! no mysteries, priests, and ceremonies! I bowed, and said I did not comprehend them. I heard them exclaim among themselves, "Poor man! into what excess of blindness, ignorance, and barbarism is he plunged!" "My friend," said one of them, "give thanks to God for having conducted you among us, to be instructed in our holy religion. You do not know, then, that God has made himself a man?" I assured them it was the first time I had heard of it, and asked them why he had become a man? "Know," continued they, "that the first man ate an apple which God had forbidden him, in consequence of which all his posterity were condemned to eternal punishment. At another time men became so criminal that the Almighty repented of having created them, and drowned them all with the exception of eight persons. The posterity of these became no better; God continued to be displeased; and, as it was necessary to reconcile him to mankind, God the Son became a man to appease God the Father."

This divine family astonished me a little. And the daughter of God, said I, what is become of her? They answered gravely, "God has no daughter." Oh! he has but a son: but how do you know the sex of this son? They answered, "God is incorporeal; he has no sex." I insisted, how could God the Father produce God the Son? He begot him. God has a sex, then; he must also have a wife. They smiled at me again. But when did the father beget this son? From all eternity. My friends, there is an apparent contradiction; it is not possible for the son who was begotten to be as old as the father. Has the father, then, any other children? No; but there is a third person, who proceeds from the father and the son. I suppose he was begotten, also? No; certainly not: pray take care what you say, or you will be guilty of heresy. I replied, I did not understand them.

O, sir, these are mysteries which God himself has revealed to men, to the end that they might understand nothing. Wonderful! said I. They continued: God wished to humble men's reason; that is, to give them a disregard for the most precious gift they hold of his bounty. And you make no use of your reason, then? O yes; we are allowed to use it in all other actions of our lives; but in matters of religion it would be impious. Better and better, said I. So then I find you have three gods? No, no, replied they; we have indeed three persons, of whom the first is the Father, the second is the Son, or word, the third is the Holy Spirit; but all these three make only one God. How, gentlemen? these three make but one, and one makes three? Yes; it is so, replied they, though contrary to all the rules of arithmetic: you must know that our theology is far superior to this petty science; however, we will explain the whole to you.

What do you call the third person? said I. The Holy Ghost. Has the Holy Ghost been a man, also? No; but he became a pigeon: we do not know, indeed, that this was his natural form, but when he appeared to the apostles he was pleased to borrow that shape.

And the Son of God has been a man from all eternity? O, no; only seventeen hundred years. Of whom, and how was he born? He was born of a virgin. She would certainly be much surprised, knowing her-

self to be a virgin? O yes; you are right; but an angel came to prepare her, that she might not be alarmed in being brought to bed. Yet I suppose you will be still more surprised when we tell you she was married? O no; pardon me, I understand this mystery better than all the others. Nay, do not jest, sir; her husband had not slept with her; we have it so revealed to us. And pray how did she conceive? By the operation of the Holy Ghost. But you say that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son? Yes, sir, it is so, by the infallible decision of the holy church. And who was his mother? The wife of a carpenter. What kind of a life did he lead? He served thirty years in his father's shop, and was very serviceable to him. Indeed! gentlemen; very well! I perceive you have sublime notions of the Divinity. At the age of thirty he began to preach to the people in the country, which lasted some time: at length the magistrates became displeased, because in his sermons he said a great deal about rich men, and the officers of government. He foresaw that he would be punished, and perspired both water and blood. Indeed! that is another fine trait in his character.

To be continued.

AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH.

Continued from page 211.

It is unnecessary to multiply quotations in support of what I undertook in the outset to demonstrate—namely, that the books attributed to Moses contain internal evidence fatal to his being their author, as I am persuaded no one who has bestowed any attention on the subject can entertain the smallest doubt respecting it. Is it not strange that there is no mention of, or allusion to, the pretended five books of Moses, either in the books of Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel; in the early part of the books of Kings, or in the Chronicles, until the time of Josiah; that is, about 850 years after the flight from Egypt? Solomon is stated to have preserved the tables of the law; but not a word is mentioned in his day, or in the histories of his reign, of these five books. When Heliakiah the priest is said to have found them, not a man among the Jews, high or low, learned or unlearned, pretended to have any knowledge of them, except the prophetess Huldah, who adapted or suited her exhortations to his views and wishes, as is manifest from the narrative. That a book of such size, of such importance, the alleged work of the national lawgiver, should be unnoticed and unknown for 850 years, is absolutely incredible, had it really existed previous to the time of its discovery.

We shall suppose, for the sake of illustration, that there was such a person as Moses, and that he was the author of the following writings:

1. The account of the two and forty journeys of the Israelites out of Egypt, comprised in the 32d chapter of Numbers.
2. The book of the law, which the levites were ordered to read to the people every seventh year, at the feast of the tabernacles, Deut. 31 and 11; and which seems to have been the curses contained in the 14th verse of the 27th chapter of that book.

3. The ten commandments, said, in one passage, to have been written by Jehovah on two tables of stone, and, in another, by Moses; who is stated, Exodus 24th, 3 and 4, to have dictated them to the people in the morning, and to have written them afterward on the same day.

4. The song mentioned in Deuteronomy 31 and 22d, and in Deut. 32d.

These are all the productions, even admitting the Bible account to be correct, which are said to have been actually *written* by Moses. All his other exhortations in the Pentateuch are detailed to us as having been *spoken*, but *not written*, by him. Now it is clear that the books composing the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses; for the people were to be instructed in the commandments of God, and the exhortations of Moses, not by copies of a book distributed that they could read themselves, but by having these commandments periodically *read* to them by the priests and levites; so that they must necessarily have been short and concise.

A people constantly engaged in wars with their neighbors—slaves to the Egyptians—then slaves for 8 years under Kersan—then for 18 under Eglon—then for 20 under Jabin—then for 7 under the Midianites—then for 18 under the Philistines and Ammonites—then for 40 under the Philistines—then for 70 under the Babylonians—could have no time or inclination to cultivate letters among the mass of the nation. It is, indeed, acknowledged by their historian Josephus, that they “never wrote any thing.” What knowledge of letters they did possess, must have been confined to their priesthood, with whom alone their sacred books were deposited.

But what is conclusive that the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses, comprising, as it does, a large volume, is, that there were only two modes of writing known to Moses; one by cutting the words in stone, and the other by tracing them on soft mortar or plaster, which last method he expressly recommends to the Jews. Perhaps the tables of stone used on Mount Horeb were also plastered, for Moses wrote thereon the commandments in one morning, as appears by the passage already cited. That he would recommend to his people the most convenient method of writing then known, there can be no doubt. That method is thus detailed: “Thou (the people) shalt set up great stones and plaster them with plaster, and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law.” 27 Deut.

To have written all the didactic part of the Pentateuch, either in the one way or the other, would have been nearly impossible; and, when written, what building could contain this heap of stones, or how were they to be transported? The methods employed preclude the supposition of more than half a dozen pages. When, therefore, the author of this collection, or his translator, makes Moses *write the law in a book*, he conforms himself to the language and ideas of his own day, not of the days of Moses. The author, therefore, wrote or compiled it when books were in common use.

There is no evidence of the papyrus being used for writing in the time of Moses, nor for a long time after. Had it been used, he would not have recommended plaster or mortar spread upon the surface of a large stone. This is too evident to require further elucidation: but it may be observed,

that when Esdras, 900 years afterward, wished to rewrite the Law from memory, after it had been burnt, as he alleged, he made use of box wood, and employed five secretaries forty days. Amid these alterations, where shall we find the genuine Law of Moses?

But, how would a book of papyrus have kept for 800 years, buried in dust and dirt, neglected and unknown? For, if it had been carefully kept, it would have been known, resorted to, referred to, cited, read, copied, extracted, revered. But we hear nothing of the book of the Law, till first brought to light by Hilkiah, who took his own time to compose or compile it, as might best suit his own purposes.

Hence, as the priests of Baal and other Phenician deities interfered greatly with the interest and influence of the Jewish priests of the Mosaic law, in the time of Ammon and Manassah, the immediate predecessors of Josiah, and also at the commencement of Josiah's reign, we can well account for all the violent denunciations against the Israelites for "going whoring after other gods;" and particularly the Jeremiad in 38 Deut. 48, &c., which, with strange coincidences, Jeremiah himself has adopted as descriptive of the incursions of the northern Jeythce.

These proofs might be extended satisfactorily to establish the absolute apocryphal character, in point of historical credit, of the five books of Moses, as they are very improperly called. But I shall proceed to accumulate a few more objections, that the question may be set at rest.

Shaphan the scribe went to the king, and said, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. No inquiry was made, no account was given, how or where Hilkiah found it, or on what authority he presumed it was written by Moses. "And Shaphan read it before the king." Now I appeal to any person in the slightest degree conversant with languages, whether any man could read off, or any other man understand at once, a book written 800 years before! The language and phraseology would necessarily be so altered by time as to render it unintelligible. It is so with the Latin, French, English, of two or three hundred years interval. Compare the language of the twelve tables with the code of Justinian; the *Poesies de Clotilde* with the verses of Delisle; or even Chaucer with Dryden and Pope. The whole story shows manifest concert between the high priest Hilkiah, his pupil Josiah, the scribe Shaphan, the prophetess Huldah, and the prophet Jeremiah, who appears from 1 Jerem. to have been a relation! All meant to exasperate the people against the priests of Baal, and frighten them into obedience to the priests of Moses. I beg of the unprejudiced reader to peruse the account in 2 Kings, chap. 22, and in 2 Chron., chap. 34 and 35, and he will be convinced that this is a fair conclusion, manifestly resulting from the facts recounted.

Suppose any person of the present day were to produce a book of laws written in the time of king Ethelbert of England, and promulgated by his authority, would not the learned world require a full and particular account of the book and the discovery of it, and undeniable evidences of its authenticity, before they would admit it? But here is a book claiming to be the autograph of the great national lawgiver of the Jews—containing the only authentic history of the transactions of their ancestors—the only title to the national possessions—the only justification of the national incursions into the dominions of their neighbors—their only code of laws reli-

gious and civil—the only authority for the claims of the priesthood—a book that ought to have been periodically read to the people by their clergy appointed so to do—that ought to have been familiar to their learned men and men of rank—produced for the first time after an interval of 800 years by Hilkiab the priest, who gives no other account of it than, *I found it!*

And is this the authority on which we are required to believe, that the Pentateuch, such as we have it, is the real composition of the lawgiver Moses, penned under the influence of divine inspiration, and which we are denounced if we suspect as deficient in historical authenticity or scientific infallibility!

But other difficulties remain. It is a fact not disputed in the present day, that the Hebrew spoken by the tribe of Judah was not the same with the Samaritan dialect used by the other tribes of Israel. This last was the language of the Canaanites or Phenicians, which continued in use in Samaria, from the earliest times, and in which the Samaritan copy of the Pentateuch was written and is still extant. The language used by the tribe of Judah, after the captivity, was contaminated with the Chaldee, and written not in the Phenician but in the Chaldee character, still adopted; while the old Samaritan was the Phenician, or a dialect of the Phenician. There is still extant a Pentateuch in the Hebrew or Chaldee dialect. Now, the Samaritan being the oldest language, and the Chaldaic Hebrew a dialect gradually introduced among the Jews to its exclusion, it is more likely that the law of Moses should be written in the older than in the later language. But the book of Hilkiab was not written in the Samaritan language, or character, which was held in great disrepute in Judah. It was written in a dialect varying from the Samaritan, and in a character introduced long after the time of Moses.

To be continued.

THE QUESTIONS OF ZAPATA.

From the French of Voltaire.

Continued from page 217.

41. I do not know what to say in justification of Samuel, who bewed to pieces king Agag, whom Saul had taken prisoner and had reserved for ransom. I cannot say whether our king Philip would be applauded or not, if after he had taken prisoner a Moorish king, and had compounded with him for his ransom, he should cut him up into small pieces.

42. We should pay, I admit, great respect to the character of David, who was a man after God's own heart; but I fear I am not sufficiently versed in ethical science to justify, by the ordinary laws, the conduct of David, who, as the scriptures record, associated himself with four hundred men that were remarkable for their vices, and overwhelmed with debt; who marched at the head of them for the purpose of plundering the mansion of Nabal, a servant of the king, and who, eight days after, espoused his widow; who went to offer his services to Achish, the enemy of the king, and in the mean time burnt and plundered the provinces of the allies of Achish, preserving from the sword neither age nor sex; who, as soon

as he took possession of the throne, furnished himself with a fresh bevy of concubines; yet not content with them, forced away Bathsheba from her husband, and caused him to be slain whom he had thus dishonored. I have still some difficulty in believing that God could afterward be born in Judea a descendant from this same adulteress and homicide, who are reckoned among the ancestors of the Eternal Being. I have already requested your attention to this last article, which is of a nature to excite very unpleasant sensations in the minds of devout persons.

43. The treasure possessed by David and Solomon, which amounted to more than five thousand millions of golden ducats, is a circumstance that appears difficult to be reconciled with the extreme poverty of the country, and with the state to which the Jews were reduced under Saul, when, it appears, they did not even possess sufficient convenience for the reparation of their implements of husbandry. Our colonels of cavalry would shrug up their shoulders, if I were to tell them that Solomon had four hundred thousand horse in a little kingdom in which asses only were, and are now to be seen; a circumstance which I have already had the honor of representing to you.

44. If it be necessary for me to give a history of the frightful cruelties of nearly all the kings of Judah and Israel, I fear I shall be the means of shocking, rather than of edifying, the feeble minded. The whole of these kings were in the habit of assassinating one another a little too often; and, if I am not deceived, this was no good policy.

45. I perceive this petty nation existing in scarcely any other than a state of slavery, either under the Phenicians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Syrians, or the Romans; and I shall perhaps be put to some little trouble in my endeavors to reconcile so much misery with the magnificent promises of the Jewish prophets.

46. I know that all the oriental nations had their prophets; but those of the Jews, I think, are hardly to be interpreted. What am I to understand by the vision which Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, had near the river Chebar; by the four animals which had each four faces and four wings, with the feet of calves; by the wheel which had also four faces; and by the firmament which was placed over the heads of the animals? How shall I interpret the order God gave to Ezekiel to swallow a roll of parchment, to cause himself to lie bound, and then to remain lying on his left side for ninety days, and afterward to turn himself on his right side, and remain in that position during forty days, and to eat his bread covered with excrement instead of butter? I cannot penetrate the concealed sense of what Ezekiel says in the sixteenth chapter: "When your breasts were formed, and your hair had grown, I spread myself over you and covered your nakedness; I presented you with robes, with sandals, with girdles, with costly ornaments, and pendants for the ears; but then thou didst build for thyself a * * * * * and didst prostitute thyself in all the public places;" and in the twenty-third chapter the Prophet says, "Aholah has passionately desired the embraces of those who have the virile member like that of asses, and who scatter their seed like horses." Most learned masters, inform me whether you think yourselves worthy of Aholah's favors.

47. It will be my duty to explain the grand prophecy of Isaiah, which regards our Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be found, as you well know, in the seventh chapter. Rezen, king of Syria, and Pekah, the petty king of Israel, were besieging Jerusalem; in the mean time, Ahaz, king of Jerusalem, consulted the prophet Isaiah in respect to the issue of the siege. Isaiah, by way of reply, says, "God shall give you a sign; a young woman shall conceive and bring forth a son, who shall be called Emmanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat before he be of an age to distinguish the good from the evil. And before the time that he shall be able to reject the evil and choose the good, thy country shall be delivered from those two kings. And the Lord shall whistle to the flies that are at the extremities of the rivers of Egypt, and to the bees that are in the land of Assyria. And in this day the Lord shall make use of a hired razor in those that are beyond the river, and shall shave the head, and the groin, and the beard, of the king of Assyria."

We find in the eighth chapter that the prophet, in order to fulfil the prophecy, goes to bed with the prophetess, who afterward brings forth a son; and the Lord says to Isaiah, "You shall call his name Maher-salal-has baz," (that is, haste to take the spoils,) "and before that the infant shall know how to pronounce the name of his father or his mother, the power of Damascus shall be overthrown." Without your assistance, I shall not be able to give a neat explanation of this important prophecy.

48. In what light am I to receive the history of the prophet Jonah, who was ordered to go to Nineveh for the purpose of preaching repentance to the Ninevites? The inhabitants of Nineveh were not Israelites, and it seems as though it was Jonah's duty to instruct them in the Jewish laws before he issued his mandates for repentance. The prophet, however, instead of obeying the Lord, went on board a vessel bound for Tarshish, with the intention of going to that place. In the course of the voyage a tempest arose, and the sailors threw Jonah into the sea in order to appease the storm. God sends a great fish, which swallows up Jonah, and he remained three days and three nights in the belly of this huge animal. God then commands the fish to vomit up the prophet; the command is obeyed, and Jonah finds himself on the shores of Joppa. God then orders him a second time to go to Nineveh, and to proclaim that in forty days she shall be overthrown, unless she repent of her misdeeds. From Joppa to Nineveh there is a distance of more than four hundred miles. Do not all these histories require in the reader that superior kind of learning which I am deficient in? I would willingly confound the scavans who pretend that this account is taken from the ancient fable of Hercules. Hercules, it appears, was inclosed for three days in the belly of a whale; but in the mean time he fared sumptuously, for he feasted on the liver of the animal, which he by some means or other contrived to broil. The prophet Jonah was not quite so adroit.

49. Teach me the art to explain some of the first verses of the prophet Hosea. God expressly commands him to take a whore and to beget some bastards, and the prophet punctually obeys the order; he addresses himself to Madam Gomer, the daughter of Diblain; he cohabits with her for three years, and begets three children; this, then, is a type. God then requires another type; he orders the prophet to lie with some other wanton

who is married, and who has already planted horns on her husband's forehead. The worthy Hosea, always obedient to the Lord's commands, has not much trouble in finding a handsome lady of this character, and she only costs him sixteen drachms and a measure of barley.* I beg you will have the goodness to inform me what the value of the drachm was at that period among the Jews, and likewise how much you give to the wenches at this day, when you cohabit with them by order of the Lord.

50. I have still greater need of your sage instruction when I come to the New Testament: I am fearful I shall be put to a nonplus in my endeavors to reconcile the two genealogies of Jesus; for it will be said that Matthew gives Jacob for the father of Joseph, and that Luke makes him to be the son of Heli; which constitutes an impossibility, unless, indeed, we can transform *he* into *ja*, and *li* into *cob*. I shall be asked how it happens that one list contains fifty-six generations, and the other only forty-two, and why these generations are totally different; and also why that genealogy, which, according to the general statement, should include forty-two generations, contains only forty-one; and, in fine, why the genealogical tree is exclusively that of Joseph, who was not the father of Jesus? I am dubious whether I shall be able to make any other than those silly sort of replies, which have been made by all my predecessors: I hope, however, you will extricate me from this labyrinth. Are you of the opinion of St. Ambrose, who asserted that the angel impregnated Mary through the medium of the ear, *Maria per aurem imprægnata est*; or do you believe with Sanchez that the virgin emitted seed in her junction with *Spiritus Sanctus*? The question is rather curious: the sage Sanchez has no doubt whatever but that each of them had emissions at the same moment; for he conceives that this simultaneous recounter of the two seeds is absolutely necessary to cause generation. Is it evident that Sanchez was better versed in theology than in physics, and that the *forte* of the Jesuites is not the begetting of children.

51. If I announce, according to Luke, that Augustus ordered a general census or taxation at the time Mary was pregnant; that Cyrenius or Quirinus published an account of the same; that Joseph and Mary repaired to Bethlehem for the purpose of being included in this census; and if I am laughed at to my face, and the antiquaries should inform me that such a taxation never took place in the Roman empire; that it was Quintilius Verrus and not Cyrenius that was the governor of Syria at the time alluded to; that Cyrenius did not rule over Syria till ten years after the birth of Christ; I say, at all this I should be very much embarrassed, but, without doubt, your profound elucidations will completely obviate these trifling difficulties. For should there be found one single falsehood in a sacred book, can that book be any longer held as sacred?

52. When I shall recount that according to Matthew the holy family journeyed into Egypt, the reply will be that the account is false, since

* The Christian's apology for all the foregoing indecencies is, that the Jews became so abominably wicked, that even their language took the infection, and became so wholly corrupted, that the most obscene expressions were frequently made use of even in serious matters. So far we may acquiesce; (though the statement is not very complimentary to the understanding of those who pay deference to the records of such a villainous crew;) but the Lord himself, in the infancy of his wisdom, has deigned to follow the shocking example, and dictated to the prophets and the holy ones of Israel in a language too shameful for even a common brothel!

according to the other evangelists the holy family must have remained in Judea; and, if I then agree that the sacred trio did remain in Judea, it will be maintained that they journeyed into Egypt. Is it not the best and shortest way to settle the dispute, to maintain that one may be in two places at the same time, since St. Francis Xavier, and several other saints, have been thus situated?

53. The astronomers may ridicule the account of the star which conducted the three kings into a stable; but you, being well versed in the grand science of astrology, can give sufficient reasons for the appearance of such a phenomenon. Inform me, especially, how much gold they offered to the baby god; for you are accustomed to receive much of this precious metal, from kings as well as from the people. And with regard to the fourth king, Herod, wherefore did he fear that the infant Jesus, brought forth in this same stable, should hereafter become king of the Jews? Herod was only king by the suffrage of the Romans; this, then, was the affair of Augustus, and not Herod's concern. The massacre of the young children is rather a strange account, and I am sorry that no Roman historian has thought the affair worthy of his notice. An ancient martyrology, professing to give a *true* account, reckons there were forty thousand infants put to death on the occasion: if you wish me to add a few more thousands to the number, you have only to say the word.

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1827.

Mr. Owen.—By a late arrival from England, we have received from Mr. Owen a copy of an address, which he has recently published, containing a clear and forcible statement of his views and principles. Although this document may not be considered as exactly coming within the scope of our plan, we have been induced to lay it before our readers, to gratify a wish, which many of them have expressed, that some correct information should be given on a subject so intimately connected with human happiness; and regarding which it is in vain to look into the newspapers for any thing that can be depended upon. We have been the more readily induced to give Mr. Owen's statement publicly, that we are satisfied of the correctness of the principles for which he contends, and of the practicability, under proper arrangements, of carrying them into effect.

ADDRESS FROM MR. OWEN.

To the Agriculturists, Mechanics, and Manufacturers, both Masters and Operatives, of Great Britain and Ireland.

Two years ago I left you in apparent prosperity; you then thought that war only could stop the progress of your success; you have remained at peace, and yet you have passed through a period of more distress than the oldest of you had previously experienced.

You were subjected to these severe sufferings when your industry was at its height, when capital was overflowing, and when both islands were

full of whatever could be required to support in comfort a much larger population.

Your distress, therefore, did not arise from a deficiency of food or clothing in the islands, from a want of industry in masters or servants, from a want of capital, of raw materials, or of finished productions of any kind; but, on the contrary, because the country superabounded in the necessities, comforts, and luxuries of life, even to saturation, until all markets, both at home and abroad, were overstocked by your industry—and yet were you taught to believe that you were to look for relief only from an increase of those markets.

To those who have been accustomed to observe what has been in progress for some years past, your sufferings created no surprise; indeed they were anticipated and distinctly foretold. As the same cause which produced your distress is yet in full action, it is natural to expect that the same effect, at no distant period, will again follow; but, as this cause is daily growing in magnitude, it may be reasonably anticipated that the succeeding distress will be more severe than the last.

This distress, however, falls chiefly on you, the industrious producers of abundance; and it behoves you well to understand how this unfavorable result follows from your best directed efforts, that you may attain the knowledge of the means by which you may not only prevent its recurrence, but learn also how to acquire a fair share of the abundance which you create.

You are deeply interested in probing this subject to its foundation; in ascertaining why, contrary to the usual laws of Nature, a superabundance of all the necessities, comforts, and luxuries of life should uniformly afflict you, who produce them, with extreme poverty and misery.

I will endeavor to trace this subject in such a manner as to make its progress obvious to every one who has been accustomed to reflect.

Your labor is the support of yourselves and families; all the wealth which you and the other classes consume is produced by it; and, under the existing arrangement of society, you have to sell your labor as any other commodity is sold, and upon its merchantable value in the general market of commerce your prosperity or adversity depend. When it is of low value, you are in poverty, and when it is in high estimation, you are in comparative affluence.

There is, however, a silent and almost unnoticed change in progress, which has reduced, and will further reduce, the value of your labor.

For, all artificial operations which supersede manual labor come in competition with your powers of producing; and if such artificial operations should be continually extended, they must, while the existing organization of society remains, sooner or later reduce you to the lowest stage of existence.

Machinery, after it has been introduced to a certain amount, comes in direct competition with your labor; and, as machinery is extended through the various departments of production, the value of your labor must diminish; and hence the sole cause of your pecuniary distress for some years past. The different causes which have been assigned for your distress were nothing more than the immediate mode by which superabundance produced the embarrassment.

Prior to the revolutionary war of France, the population of various countries frequently suffered great privations from war, or famine occasioned by war, or by a succession of unfavorable seasons.

It was, however, in the midst of that war, somewhere about the year 1810, that the population of those islands were first afflicted with the evils of superabundance.

Mechanic and other scientific improvements had been so greatly extended at that period, that even under the enormous waste of a wide spread and most destructive war they were found amply sufficient to supply that enormous waste, to saturate all the foreign markets open to your legal and contraband trade, and to over supply the home markets.

You then, for the first time, experienced the paralyzing effects of a superabundance, for which the present organization of society does not admit of any other remedy than time, to dissipate or waste, in foreign markets, the superabundance which you toiled to produce, while your labor, for this period, becomes of little, and, in many instances, of no value; and you are compelled, in consequence, to experience all the privations of famine and evils of poverty; while yet, during this period, you are surrounded with a superfluity of necessities, comforts, and luxuries, of which the present arrangement in civilized life forbids you to partake.

You again experienced the dire effects of superabundance after the termination of the war in the years 1815 and 1816, when the cessation from waste and destruction left you so much production on hand, that you were thrown out of employment and plunged into poverty. You suffered from the same cause in 1816 and 1819, again in 1821, and lastly in 1825; and, as long as the present organization of society shall continue, these periods of distress will occur frequently, and the evils which they will occasion will be more severely and extensively felt, until your sufferings, in the end, will become so unbearable as to create a necessity which, through wisdom or violence, will effect a radical change in the general structure of society.

Thus, then, during the French revolutionary war, you passed a boundary never before reached in the history of man: you passed the regions of poverty arising from necessity, and entered those of permanent abundance, as soon as your affairs shall be directed by foresight and wisdom.

You commenced a new era in the progress of civilization; and thus have you attained the means to insure the "wealth of nations," the object so long sought for by legislators and political economists.

It is now no longer necessary, except through ignorance, "that man should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow;" for the inventions and discoveries which have been matured, and which are now in full practice, are more than sufficient, with very light labor, under a right direction, to supply the wants and insure the independence of all, without real injury to any.

To understand this part of the subject, your best attention is requisite, because it is not only new to you, but it appears to be so also to legislators and political economists; for they continue still to direct their efforts to instruct the world how to *increase* its wealth, while the real difficulty against which society has to contend is, to discover the means by which an *excess* of wealth, now so easily produced, can be prevented from injuring all

classes, who experience from it precisely the same effects which have been heretofore engendered by poverty.

Legislators and political economists seem to be many years behind the real advance of science, and the general knowledge which has been diffused among the people. They still think and act upon the principles advocated by Adam Smith, who lived and wrote before the introduction of the new mechanical and chemical manufacturing system, which has already essentially altered the relative condition of all classes in Britain, and which, in its natural progress, cannot fail to force a greater change in human affairs than has been effected by all the previous revolutions which have agitated the world.

The enormous power and silent progress of this new system appear to be unknown and unheeded by modern political economists; and without a knowledge of both they may as well attempt to enlighten the public on the science of political economy, as to attempt to develop the principles of agriculture without having regard to the influence of the sun on vegetation.

When Adam Smith wrote his celebrated essays on the wealth of nations, men were struggling against a deficiency of the powers of production in society to supply all their reasonable wants; and the principle of division of labor, which he so ably advocated, was well calculated by its practice to lessen the difficulty. But he could not then imagine that in less than half a century the improvements effected by the combined sciences of mechanism and chemistry should set aside the necessity for the division of human labor to create the requisite wealth for happiness. It is now, however, obvious, that as the necessity for a minute division of labor existed, the happiness of the human race could not be attained.

Since the time that Adam Smith wrote, the extension of mechanical contrivances, and the discoveries in chemistry, combined with the progress and diffusion of general knowledge, have rendered a minute division of human labor, for the creation of wealth, as unnecessary as experience has proved it to be deteriorating to the physical and mental faculties of man, and, therefore, always opposed to his happiness.

Mechanism and chemistry have been directed to multiply the number of scientific hands, far exceeding the conception of ordinary minds.

By these means, the powers of production have been increased, in Great Britain alone, since the days of Adam Smith, more than *one hundred times*; or, in other words, these artificial powers have been so directed as to produce the same effect as would arise from adding one hundred additional pair of hands to each producer, and these artificial hands have been *better* formed for their peculiar object of production than the hands formed by Nature.

In consequence, the new powers of production created in Great Britain and Ireland, since the days of Adam Smith, are now little, if any, short of the labor that could be obtained from 600 millions of active men, previous to that period; or, the working classes of great Britain and Ireland can now, aided by mechanical and chemical improvements, finish as much work of the kind to which their labor is directed, as could be completed in the days of Adam Smith by *three times the whole manual power of the world!*

And this power, which our legislators and political economists seem to disregard in all their reasonings and calculations, is annually increasing in a continually increasing ratio; for new discoveries are daily made in the mechanical and chemical sciences.

It is this power, which is hourly encroaching on the value of your labor, that has thus far oppressed you by the facility it affords to *over* production; while the existing organization of society has been formed solely to counteract the evils of *under* production.

At the periods when the existing arrangements of society were formed, no one could suspect the possibility of any evil from over production, and, in consequence, no remedy for it has been provided.

This extraordinary state of matters has arisen in the natural course of events tending towards important improvements, and evidently not designed by any class or by any individuals. It is useless, therefore, to blame any parties, but most necessary, in practice, to adopt such measures as will counteract these evils, and enable society to enjoy the benefits of all our discoveries and improvements.

It is acknowledged that a state of society has now arisen which puzzles and confounds all statesmen and political economists. All who reflect are deeply engaged in attempts to discover the cause of, and the cure for, the temporary evils which the late rapid progress in physical knowledge has produced. There is, therefore, now much mind at work on the subject, which is too important to be neglected by any party; and no doubt the truth, ere long, will be elicited, and your condition will be ameliorated. The fact is, all existing governments are too timid, and are afraid to probe the subject to its foundation. This work must be accomplished by the union of men of high intellectual acquirements, and of great moral courage.

To be concluded in our next.

Free Press Association.—The lectures at this Association continue to be delivered to respectable and crowded audiences, on Sunday mornings, at 10 o'clock, in the Military Hall, corner of Fourth street and Sixth avenue; and in the afternoon, at half past 2 o'clock, in the Temple of Arts, William street. Owing to the regular general monthly meeting of the Association taking place on Sunday the 4th instant, at 10 o'clock forenoon, the next *morning* lecture is unavoidably postponed until Sunday the 11th inst.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Holy Relics.—The Metropolitan Church of St. Lorenzo, at Genoa, was raised in the 11th century, and bears great evidence of its antiquity; the architecture is gothic, and the building is cased with black and white marble, which gives it the look of a chessboard. The ignoble martyrdom of St. Lorenzo is depicted on the facade, in basso relievo. The immense *gridiron* is evidently a patent one, and looks like the sign of a

cook's shop. The heart sickens over these frequent images of culinary martyrdom, every where boiling, broiling, frying saints, the products of legends as foolish as they are false. The worshippers of Apollo and Minerva were not persecutors. Contemporary historians are generally silent upon these histories, which are rendered still more improbable by their palpable contradictions of the known usages of antiquity. The first well authenticated cases of martyrdom occurred only after the establishment of a *paid* hierarchy, fired by interests which are not those of society at large. Then it was that intolerance stalked forth in all her virulence; that the faggot was kindled and the axe raised; and that the Cranmers, who burned their victims under one interest today, were burned in their turn tomorrow under another. The passion for representing martyrdom, under all the magic influence of the arts, did great injury to society. The eye and heart were thus habituated to bloodshed, and rendered callous to suffering; while the most gloomy notions of Providence deadened moral sympathy, and perverted the sense of moral truth.

The church of St. Lorenzo is further celebrated for containing a most sacred relic, the "*sagro catino*," a dish of one entire and perfect emerald, said to be that on which the Saviour ate his last supper. Such a dish, in the house of a Jewish publican, was a miracle in itself. Mr. Eustace says, he looked for the dish, but found that the French, "whose delight is brutal violence, as it is that of the lion or the tiger," had carried it away, and so indeed they did. But that was nothing. The carrying off relics—the robbing of Peter to pay Paul, and spoiling one church to enrich another—was an old trick of legitimate conquerors in all ages; for that very "dish" had been carried away by the royal crusaders, when they took Cesarea in Palestine, under Gughelmo Embriaco, in the twelfth century. In the division of spoils, this *emerald* fell to the share of the Genoese crusaders, into whose holy vocation something of their old trading propensities evidently entered; and they deemed the vulgar value, the profane price of this treasure so high, that on an emergency they pledged it for 9,500 livres. Redeemed and replaced, it was guarded by knights of honor, called *Clavigeri*, and only exposed once a year! Millions knelt before it; and the penalty on the bold but zealous hand that touched it with a diamond was a thousand golden ducats. The French seized this relic, as the crusaders had in the twelfth century; but instead of conveying it from the church of St. Lorenzo to the abbey of St. Depis, (*selon les regles*,) they most sacrilegiously sent it to a *laboratory*. Instead of submitting it, with its traditional story, to a council of Trent, they handed it over to the Institute of Paris, and chemists, geologists, and philosophers were called on to decide the fate of that vessel which bishops, priests, and deacons had pronounced to be too sacred for human investigation, or even for human touch. The result of the scientific investigation was, that the *emerald* dish was a *piece of green glass*.

Election and Reprobation.—"The happiness of the elect in heaven will in part consist in witnessing the torments of the damned in hell, and among these it may be their own children, parents, husbands, wives, and friends on earth. One part of the business of the blessed is to celebrate

the doctrine of reprobation. While the decree of reprobation is externally executing on the vessels of wrath, the smoke of their torment will be eternally ascending in the view of the vessels of mercy, who, instead of taking the part of those miserable objects, will say amen, hallelujah, praise the Lord. It concerns therefore all the expectants of heaven to anticipate this trying scene, and ask their hearts whether they are not on the Lord's side, and can praise him for reprobating as well as electing love."—*Exmon's Sermons*, xvi.

"When they (i. e. the saints) shall see how great the misery is from which God hath saved them, and how great a difference he hath made between their state and the state of others *who were by nature, and perhaps by practice, no more sinful and ill deserving than they*, it will give them more a sense of the wonderfulness of God's grace to them. Every time they look upon the damned, it will excite in them a lively and admiring sense of the grace of God in making them so to differ. The sight of hell torments will exalt the happiness of the saints forever."—*Ibid*, ser. xi.

"The saints in glory will be far more sensible how dreadful the wrath of God is, and will better understand how terrible the sufferings of the damned are, yet this will be no occasion of grief to them, but rejoicing. They will not be sorry for the damned; it will cause no uneasiness or dissatisfaction to them, but, on the contrary, when they see this sight it will occasion rejoicing and excite them to joyful praises."—*Edwards's Practical Sermons*, xxii.

Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple: who ever knew her put to the worse in a free and open encounter.—*Milton's Areopagitica*.

The following publications may be had at the office of the *Correspondent*, No. 15 Chamber street:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath Day—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, Lond. ed., 2 vols. in one—\$1.25.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

AUTHENTICITY OF THE PENTATEUCH.

Continued from page 239.

But, whatever might be the authority or the contents of the book produced by Hilkiah, it exists no more: *it was burnt*. Hilkiah produced this book about a dozen years before the Jews were carried into captivity to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar. After many years of Jewish captivity, Artaxerxes and Cyrus sent Ezra, or Esdras, to settle again in Jerusalem, with the remnant that could be collected of the Jewish captives. An account of this return is given in the book of Ezra, among the canonical books of the Bible; and a fuller and more particular account of the same transaction, in the two books of Esdras in the Apocrypha. There are some differences in names and minor particulars, but they are substantially the same.

Esdras gives the following information: "Book 2d, ch. 14, v. 19. Then answered I, and said, Behold, Lord, I will go as thou hast commanded me, and reprove the people which are present; but they which shall be born afterward, who shall admonish *them*? Thus the world is set in darkness, and they that dwell therein are without light. For *thy Law is burnt*: therefore no man knoweth the things that are done of thee, or the works that shall begin. But if I have found grace before thee, send thy Holy Ghost into me, and I shall write all that hath been done in the world, since the beginning, which were written in thy Law; that men may find thy path, and that they which will live in the latter days may live. And he answered me saying, Go thy way, gather the people together, and say unto them, that they seek thee not for forty days. But look, thou prepare thee many box trees; and take with thee Sarea, Dabria, Jelemia, Ecamus, and Aziel, these five which are ready to write swiftly. V. 42. So these five men sat forty days, and at night they ate bread. As for me, I spake in the day, and held not my tongue at night."

In forty days they wrote 204 books: of these, Esdras was directed to publish openly all but the seventy last books, which he was to deliver only to such as be wise among the people; and he did so. This is the last passage that relates to the subject. So that the history of the Law of Moses, as contained in the Bible, informs us,

1st. That Moses wrote no long composition: none that would occupy more than a day to read or write.

2d. That what he did write was either cut upon two tables of stone, or traced in plaster while it was soft; for he would naturally prefer that

mode of writing which he chose to recommend to others as the most convenient.

3d. That we have no account of these books of Moses in any part of the Bible, from the time of their original composition, till the priest Hilkiah said that he had found them. What Hilkiah found, or what he composed; whether it was in any respect the same as the ancient Pentateuch, no one can tell; for it does not appear that it was ever published, and no trace of it remains.

4th. A few years after Hilkiah had produced his edition of the Law of Moses, the Jews were carried into captivity, where they had no means of becoming acquainted with the Law, or of observing it. Indeed, either during the invasion of the Babylonians, or during this captivity, the Book of the Law *was burnt*, and no copy of it remained; and Ezra, or Esdras, was obliged to dictate, from memory, the whole history of the world from the beginning, as well as the history and law of the Jewish nation. Except this book, so dictated by Esdras, we know of no other that relates to this question. He therefore was the probable author of the present Pentateuch, so far as history throws any light on the subject. I say the *probable* author, because there is nothing like certainty attached to any part of the historical testimony relating to the books called the Pentateuch. All that is certain about them, is, that they are not original; but when or by whom written depends on no certain evidence. The following considerations also induce me to regard Esdras as the author of them:

Because, no book of the Law existed when he undertook to compose one from recollection: the book that did exist *was burnt*.

Because, as Esdras suggested, the Pentateuch begins with a history of the world from the creation.

Because, the book of the Law compiled by Ezra, or Esdras, took him seven days to read to the people, 8 Nehem. 18, which agrees with the size of the present Pentateuch.

Because, the account of the creation is manifestly a Chaldee tradition, tacked to the Jewish history, without any connection with it. Chaldee, from speaking of God in the plural, Elohim, Gods. Chaldee, because it agrees with the Phenician and Chaldee writers as cited by Josephus, Alexander Polyhistor, and Eusebius. Chaldee, because Ezra, or Esdras, who was educated if not born in Babylon during the captivity, would derive all his knowledge from the Chaldee writers of repute in his day. Chaldee, because it is manifestly no part of the Jewish history or tradition. Moses would never have used the expression Elohim, the gods. Chaldee, also, because the Jews during their captivity, those among them who attended to literature at all, would be conversant in the Chaldee literature; and the Chaldee traditionary cosmogony would be fashionable in the time of Esdras.

To these objections, doubtless, many replies will be made. It will be said, that they are all old, and have been often and long ago refuted.

To this I answer, it is not true. They have never been refuted, and cannot be refuted by fair argument. The hardihood of assertion applied to them would astonish any unprejudiced reader, not acquainted with the clerical mode of treating these subjects.

It will be said, the contradictory passages are interpolations. To this I answer, they are incorporated with the rest of the books: they are founded on the same evidence: they appear as parts of one whole; there is no mark but the forgetfulness that dictated them, by which they are to be distinguished from the rest of the works wherein they are found. Such an objection would prevent all examination of the authenticity of testimony or evidence, from the contradictions or inconsistencies it may contain. Those who tell us these are interpolations, should inform us when they took place; how, by whom, and for what purpose. The passages objected to are no more than reasonable explanations of the text, if written, as I presume they were, by some author long after the date of the original transactions.

It will be said, that the book of Esdras is an apocryphal book. To this I answer, there is no known criterion of the books called apocryphal. Every ancient ecclesiastical author, and every great division of Christians, have different notions of books canonical and books apocryphal. There was no proposal of a Christian canon till Melito, bishop of Sardis, in the year 170; nor any canon settled on ecclesiastical authority till the council of Sardis, in 465 of the Christian era.

Further, the book of Esdras is considered as canonical by the Greek church, who are just as competent judges as any other church. It is of more authority than the book of Ezra: the book of Ezra is canonical: the book of Nehemiah is canonical: both of these books give an account of the same transactions that Esdras does. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are quite contradictory, each being the hero of his own story, and the prime agent in the transactions narrated, and hardly making mention of the other. So that, though both be canonical, it is impossible that both should be true. They can easily be compared in an hour's time. Esdras gives an account of the same transactions, with fewer contradictions: he is therefore more worthy of credit than either. The common opinion is, that Esdras and Ezra are the same person.

As to Nehemiah, the Tershitha, as he calls himself, he could not have been the author of the book ascribed to him as it now appears; for in 12 Nehem. 22 he mentions Jaddua the priest, and Darius the Persian, (Darius Codomannus,) who did not flourish in the world for 100 years afterward.

It will be said, that there is as good evidence of the authenticity of the Pentateuch, as of the works of Herodotus, Livy, Plutarch, and many other ancient historians, whose writings are now generally believed to contain faithful accounts of the facts which they detail. To this I answer, that in so far as these historians narrate occurrences within the bounds of probability, nothing can be said against admitting their testimony. But whenever they exceed this; whenever they speak of events taking place which are known to be contrary to the laws of Nature, and, therefore, false, we reject these parts of their histories. In like manner, we refuse to credit the wonderful and miraculous stories told in the Jewish books, while we readily assent to any thing they contain which we know, from experience and observation, to be founded in truth.

Herodotus informs us that, on one occasion, an ox spoke when they were leading it to be sacrificed; and, on another, that a crow prognosticated or foretold the misfortunes which attended the reign of the Roman

emperor, Domitian. The same historian gravely assures us, that the marble statues of the gods, which had been set up in the temples, at one time sweat great drops of blood. We at once smile on reading these absurdities; but what is there more absurd in the narrative than in that of the Bible, where we are as gravely told that a serpent and an ass spoke; that all the water in the land of Egypt was turned into blood; that the Lord rained bread from heaven for 40 years, and that, during the whole of that period, the shoes and garments of the Israelites neither needed to be repaired nor renewed. The individual who is so credulous as to believe all this on the authority of the Jewish books, has no better evidence of its truth than he has of the truth of what the Roman historian has written. If the one ought to be rejected as fabulous, so ought the other.

There is also this difference between the works of Herodotus, Livy, and Plutarch, and the books attributed to Moses: that the latter is said to have been specially commissioned, and instructed by God himself to write these books, while the former have no such pretensions. It therefore requires evidence to support the authenticity of the Pentateuch of a nature far more conclusive and satisfactory than that required to give currency to the works of mere historians. Before we can believe that Deity inspired any writer to communicate his will to man, we must be satisfied, from internal as well as external evidence, that the writing offered us, claiming so high a character, is every way worthy of an infinitely wise and perfect being. Does our examination of the five Jewish books convince us that we ought to view them in that favorable light? Or rather, have we not seen that they are totally destitute of that sort of evidence which would entitle them to be received in any court of judicature in the world. Independent of the numerous facts, by which it is demonstrated that Moses could not be their author, do not the books themselves afford sufficient evidence that they are unworthy of the countenance of any intelligent being? Is not the book of Genesis a collection of absurd and frivolous tales? And where is the history to be found to corroborate the statements of the book of Exodus, or of any other of the books composing the Pentateuch? Can any one, possessing common sense, believe that the Almighty would dictate such ridiculous things concerning himself as are narrated in these books? Sometimes he is represented as a laborer, toiling and exhausting himself to such a degree that he requires *rest* to recruit himself; sometimes as a tailor, regulating the dresses of the creatures he had formed; sometimes as a fringe or tassel maker, decorating a petty box of wood called their ark, or tabernacle; sometimes as their warrior and generalissimo, when, without provocation, they invaded and plundered their neighbors. When they prayed, he came and talked to them; when they sacrificed, he came and eat with them; and, as is even at this day ignorantly imagined, God had nothing to do but to be constantly at the elbows, and to attend to the wants and wishes, of the most savage, barbarous, and ignorant nation of which we have any account in history.

Mr. Jones, in his account of the canon of the scriptures, lays down the following criteria, as tests by which we may determine what are apocryphal, or spurious, and what are not, viz.:

The book is apocryphal, which contains *any contradictions*;

Or, any *histories* contrary to those known to be true.

Or, any *doctrines* contrary to those known to be true.

Or, *relations* ludicrous, trifling, fabulous, or silly.

Or, which mentions *facts* which occurred *later* than the time of the author to whom it is ascribed.

Or, whose *style* is manifestly different from the known style of its supposed author.

Or, which is written in an *idiom* or *dialect* different from that of the author to whom it is ascribed, or different from the idiom of his country.

Or, that manifests a *disposition* different from the known disposition of the supposed author.

To all this I accede; but I fear, if all these tests of authenticity should be adopted and insisted on, we should have dreadful havoc made in the canonical authority of many books that now pass through the world with a very orthodox character.

EUSEBIUS.

THE CATECHUMEN.

Continued from page 227.

At length he was arrested by the magistrates, and crucified between two robbers. And he died? Yes. And was buried? Yes. Well then I suppose that is the end of his history? Hold, sir, you go too fast; he died, it is true, but it was in consideration that God would pardon mankind. Oh, I understand you. God would pardon the sins of mankind because they had killed his son. Truly, nothing could be better imagined. But know for testimony of his divinity, he rose again the third day. And what proof have you of this? The writings of the disciples. But what said the people? They contradicted it.

Oh, gentlemen! I find you are as well provided with proofs as with reasonings; but did he perform any other miracles? Yes; he cured those possessed of evil spirits; dried a fig tree; sent devils into a herd of swine; filled the nets of his disciples with fishes, and changed water into wine; but he loved so to humble himself, that never in his life did he own that he was God. And why do you believe it? His sectaries have disputed a long time on this important article, as well as of the Holy Ghost, because three persons were not spoken of in the Old Testament. The Holy Ghost was found out to be God after twelve hundred years had passed over, and as for the divinity of Jesus, three hundred years of disputes, troubles, and massacres sufficed to decide the matter in his favor.

As you love this God so much, I suppose he was born in your country? No; he was born in another quarter of the globe. Indeed! You go very far to seek your gods! He must then have left a book of doctrines of religion, which you thought proper to adopt? No! he did not teach a new religion, neither did he write any thing; but some of his disciples have written his history and discourses. And your religion is there exactly prescribed? Oh, no! We have only a few particulars of his life, accompanied by some moral precepts; he has there declared that he came to fulfil the ancient law, and not to change it. Then there was a particular

religion in the country where he was born, before his time? Yes. And it is that same religion that you still observe? No; ours is in direct opposition to it. But whence then is this new religion, for you own that it was never announced by your God? We have explained, commented, interpreted without ceasing these seventeen hundred years on the discourses of Christ; and have drawn from them a long succession of dogmas and mysteries quite new. And do you all agree in these interpretations? No; far from it. We have always been disputing, fighting, and killing one another on account of them. Well, I am very sorry to tell you that I do not think your religion very attracting. What do you say? You do not agree in the explanations, and you quarrel and kill each other about them? Your religion does not at all please me; yet I suppose it had been adopted by the people of the country where your God dwelt? You are again deceived; Christ had but a very small number of disciples, and these were from the lowest class of the people. Have we not already told you that he was put to death by order of the magistrates? What do you say, gentlemen? Was not his doctrine believed by the people he attempted to instruct? No. His miracles, have they not persuaded those who were witnesses? No. And why should you believe them; you who came seventeen hundred years after him? O, sir, all things require an explanation. Know then that God sent his son among this people whose hearts he had hardened, purposely that they might not believe in him.

Well explained! I am quite delighted with your mode of reasoning; but pray what name do you give this people? Jews. Jews! Jews! I never heard of them. No, I believe you. They occupied such a small territory, that their reputation did not extend far; nevertheless, they were formerly God's favorite people. God chose them from among all the nations of the earth; he governed them himself, and often conversed with their chiefs. Sometimes through tenderness for his people he ordered them to massacre each other; and at one time twenty-three thousand were put to death by their own citizens at the express command of God.

God ordered one of the kings to murder every man of a nation they had vanquished; the king had the audacity to spare some who were not in a state to defend themselves and was punished for it. A son of this king was condemned to die for eating honey on the day of battle, and God, who was justly irritated at the father as well as son, proscribed them both, and made choice of a new king.

This king (whom God had expressly chosen) committed adultery with the wife of one of his generals, and massacred her husband. By the adulteress he had a son who kept seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines in his seraglio; but you must know these two kings were cherished by our God; both had heavenly benedictions heaped on their heads. The father was the man after God's own heart, and the son was the wisest of men. The Son of God, who became a man, descended in direct line from this wisest of men, and from the adulteress of whom we have just spoken.

O, gentlemen, exclaimed I, you make me shudder at your impious ideas. They resumed. Have we not told you that the conduct of this God was always mysterious, purposely to humble our weak reason? The first legislator whom God gave to his favorite people was an assassin;

but he had nevertheless the gift of performing a number of miracles. He composed a body of civil and religious rites and laws which we still revere as having been inspired by the Deity. And yet, you do not observe them? No; truly. We hold those people in horror who do so. It is true, that this was formerly the favorite people of God, and all other nations were chosen, and this favorite people rejected. Do you not admire, sir, the wisdom of the God we adore?

At this discourse, I stole away from them, and could scarcely persuade myself it was more than a dream. Having before seen to what great perfection this people had attained in every human science, I began to fear the weakness of my nature, and determined to return to my country; lest those abominable European prejudices should make me forget my duty to my fellow creatures, and reverence for the God of all worlds.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE EIGHTH.

Continued from page 230.

Such is the history of the angels among the ancient Brahmins, which they still continue to teach after the lapse of 50 centuries, and which no one who is divested of prejudice can peruse without being convinced that it was from this source the Jews and the Christians derived their ideas of evil angels, driven out of heaven, and of their prince having tempted Eve in the form of a serpent. "The angels," says Voltaire, "who, according to the Babylonians and the Jews, presided over nations, were precisely what the gods of Homer were—celestial beings subordinate to a supreme being. The imagination which produced the one, probably produced the other. The number of the inferior gods increased with the religion of Homer. Among the Christians, the number of the angels was augmented in the course of time." Scot has estimated them at a thousand millions. "The ancient mythology (continues Voltaire) of the good and bad genii having passed from the east to Greece and Rome, we consecrated this opinion, by admitting for each individual a good and an evil angel, of whom one assists him and the other torments him from his birth to his death." Mahomet, in like manner, makes two angels take an account of every man's thoughts. Sale remarks on this part of the Koran, "that the Mahometans have a tradition that the angel who notes a man's good actions has a command over him who notes his evil actions; and that when a man does a good action, the angel of the right hand writes it down ten times, and when he commits an ill action, the same angel says to the angel of the left hand, 'Forbear setting it down for seven hours: peradventure he may pray, or may ask pardon.' St. Jerome fancied that, at our births, God gave to each of us an angel to watch over our souls; and some of the earlier fathers carried the idea still farther, in appropriating to nations, cities, manhood, and infancy, each their separate and independent guardian spirit."

Having made God a material being, endowed with all the feelings and infirmities of our nature, they could not do otherwise than confer the same qualities on his angels. The Jewish writers speak of them as corporeal—having wings at their backs, which they sometimes concealed with their clothing—and fond of eating and drinking like ordinary men. The two cherubs which were in the temple had each two heads, the one that of an ox, and the other that of an eagle with six wings. The Christians paint the cherubs in the form of a flying head, with two small wings below the ear; the angels and archangels as young men, with two wings at their back. Is it not surprising, that while the air is filled with so many *substantial* beings, though invisible to our sight, we are never sensible of coming in contact with any of them? Or is it that they are so nimble, and so desirous of avoiding our gross bodies, as to be always certain, whichever way they turn, of eluding our touch? But why is it that one of these celestial beings, alleged to be so essential to the welfare of man, and who accompany him every moment of his existence, does not in these times condescend, as he did of old, to show himself in *propria personæ*? Is it that the age in which we live is destitute of that hospitality which characterized the age of the patriarchs? and that, knowing this, the angels are afraid that, instead of good cheer, they might find it difficult to obtain the necessaries of life?

Leaving these questions to be solved, if they can be solved, by those who have received grace from above, we shall proceed in our elucidation of the remaining part of the books of the Old Testament.

The 4th chapter of Genesis commences with telling us that "Adam knew his wife Eve; and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord." How nearly does this language of mother Eve resemble the cant of the present day! Every thing comes from the Lord. If it be a prize in the lottery, this, although the fruit of immorality, according to the code of fanaticism, is immediately converted into a gift from heaven, if it happen to fall to the lot of one of the faithful. If, on the contrary, sickness and ruin overwhelm him and his family, this also is distinctly traced to the hand of the Lord. "Is there evil in the city, saith the Lord, and I have not done it." It might be supposed, that as every thing which happens to men, the good and the evil, comes from God; that, as he is constantly employed in listening to and in answering the millions of prayers offered up to him from all parts of the globe, nothing would be left for the devil or his host of angels to perform. Yet we are assured, with that inconsistency which is so conspicuous in all parts of the Christian system, that Satan and his imps are actively engaged, night and day, in leading men astray from the right path; that, although God is the sole governor of the universe—"rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm"—has the hearts of all men in his hand, and turneth them whichever way he pleaseth—the devil is nevertheless the prince of the power of the air, working in the children of disobedience, and continually thwarting the well arranged plans of omnipotence.

Eve seems to have entertained the idea, that God, who had, for so trifling a fault as that of eating an apple, cursed herself, her husband, the beasts of the field, every tree and herb, and the very ground itself, could

be no other than the source of evil; for we find her acknowledging the Lord in the birth of Cain the murderer; whereas, when Abel the virtuous was born, not a word of thankfulness escaped her lips. (Ver. 2d,) "And she again bare his brother Abel, and Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."

Ver. 3d. "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. (Ver. 4,) And Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering. (Ver. 5,) But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. (Ver. 6th,) And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? (Ver. 7,) If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Here, the priests tell us, is the foundation or establishment of religious worship. And well may they claim such authority; for in no part of the Bible can there be found a more direct sanction to extortion than what this passage contains. The Lord, it seems, had no respect to the offering of Cain, because it consisted of the simple products of the earth; while the offering of Abel was graciously accepted, because it was the firstlings (that is, the young and delicate) of his flock, and of the fat thereof. Jehovah, it appears, had a more refined taste than to be put off with mere vegetables; his appetite could not be satiated unless a tender lamb or kid, served up with rich gravy, was set before him. How well did the Jewish priests improve on this example. In process of time, the blood of bulls and of goats was not sufficient to glut their voracious deity—the kidneys and the fat were added to the feast; and, to give a zest to the banquet, wine and oil were poured out in abundance, and the rarest and choicest trees pillaged of their sweets to constitute a dessert. Nor was this all: the Jehovah of the Jews—this prince of gluttons, after having revelled to his heart's content on lamb, mutton, veal, and beef—after having gorged himself with the blood which flowed from the veins of these victims, and devoured as much fat as would have surfeited an entire nation, and washed the whole down, like a bacchanalian, with goblets of the juice of the grape—after having done all this, nothing would satisfy him short of a sacrifice in the temple of Venus; for what other purpose was it that the thousands of *virgins*, said in the Bible to have been set apart for the Lord, than to administer to his libidinous desires.

Horrible and disgusting as this picture may seem, it has received no coloring from me. The Bible, indeed, would have justified one more vivid. But it was necessary to exhibit deity as is there done, to afford an excuse for the profligacy, the extortions, and the enormities of the priesthood. These favorites of heaven required a god of monstrous passions; one who delights to wallow in vice, to shelter them from public odium. Not content with a tithe of the products of the earth, they must have rich benefices, splendid palaces, costly furniture, tables groaning with the most expensive luxuries; and, under the pretence of devoting themselves and the other sex to the service of their god, they have formed institutions, in which they can gratify without restraint or observation the most licen-

tious passions to which the errors of education have given birth. It is of no avail to plead inability to satisfy the rapacity of these men. Having constantly before their eyes the rejection of Cain's simple offering, and the preference given to the rich one of his brother, they are never satisfied but when they are filling their coffers with the spoils of nations. No plea of right, of law, of justice, or even of humanity, has any influence with these men, when the question under consideration relates to the patrimony of the church.

When it is considered that the offering of Cain was the best he could present—the only one, indeed, which his means could justify—we cannot be surprised that he felt hurt at its rejection, or that he was jealous of his brother, whose offering, (which was exactly what was to be expected of a man in his circumstances,) was considered worthy of acceptance. His countenance is said to have fallen on perceiving this preference, which having attracted the notice of the Lord, he considered this a fit opportunity of giving him a lecture, from which it may fairly be inferred that it is not the *motive*, however pure, which constitutes *merit* in the eyes of heaven, but the intrinsic value of the thing offered. It is not said, or even insinuated, that the act of religious worship performed by Cain was less *sincere* than that of his brother. Yet he is told "if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Now what was this but telling Cain, that he had not done well in confining his offering to the fruits of the earth, and that he should, in order to obtain favor from on high, have presented, like his brother, a he-tacomb of cattle? Is not this, in fact, the principle recognised and acted upon by the clergy of the present day? Sincerity is of no account with them: it is the number of ceremonies, of prayers, the frequency of attendance at their preachings, the multiplicity of the gifts and offerings of their followers, that constitutes true virtue. Every thing else; the duties of a father and of a citizen—the most humane and upright conduct—in short, all that is really valuable and praiseworthy among men—is held in utter contempt—pronounced "filthy rags" and meriting the reprobation of heaven, if not accompanied by an unremitting compliance with the rules prescribed by the priesthood, and a large display of donations in support of institutions established for the sole purpose of perpetuating their grandeur and influence.

ADDRESS FROM MR. OWEN.

To the Agriculturists, Mechanics, and Manufacturers, both Masters and Operatives, of Great Britain and Ireland.

Continued from page 238.

Having attempted to explain the cause why you are so frequently poverty stricken in the midst of overflowing abundance, and while you possess the means of increasing that abundance without limit, I will endeavor to point out the means by which you may not only arrest the evil, but turn the cause which now generates it into a new channel, by which, if I am not mistaken, this evil shall be made to produce only unmixed good to yourselves and fellow creatures.

I have already stated that every invention, discovery, and improvement, in physical science, facilitates production; and that, under the present organization of society, whatever facilitates production diminishes the value of your labor in a relative proportion to the amount of production, as long as the arrangements of society render it necessary for you to dispose of it as a merchantable article, upon the principle of buying cheap and selling dear, and bartering it in this manner to the highest bidder. By this procedure you aid in bringing your labor in direct competition with mechanism and other scientific improvements, by which, as experience proves, you must continually sink in the contest, until you will ultimately descend to the lowest possible stage of existence; and until a few very wealthy families will retain you, under the fallacious notion of being free, in a more hopeless and helpless state of slavery than are the negroes in the West Indies and America, who have, what you would want, a direct claim for food, clothes, and habitation, on the master by whom they are reared or purchased.

Instead of selling yourselves to the public for money, by which your labor receives the most useless and injurious direction, would it not be more rational to apply your physical and mental powers directly for your own use, in a fair exchange among yourselves, of value for value, or the amount of labor in one article against the same amount in another?

By this simple and just mode of transacting business, labor, and not money, would become the standard of value; and, without much difficulty, the value in all articles might be represented by notes of labor for an hour, a day, a month, a year, &c. Arrangements might be devised to prevent any change in the value of these notes, which might be made to represent real wealth remaining in store; for when the articles which the notes represented were taken for consumption, or deteriorated by keeping, notes to the amount of the labor or deterioration in those articles might be destroyed.

Some difficulty might arise at first, in discovering the amount of labor which *ought* to be in every article; but this process is nothing more than ascertaining the real prime cost of articles, which truly consists in the labor required to produce them. But, as one person will take more time than another to perfect the same kind of article, the time required by a workman possessing an average degree of skill and industry should be the principle by which the calculation should be made.

This mode of conducting business will introduce principles of justice and equity in all transactions between man and man: it will gradually destroy every motive to trick, deceit, and chicanery; and, by its adoption, poverty, or the fear of poverty, will be for ever removed from the producers of real wealth.

The necessity which the present system inflicts on all, to endeavor to sell their own labor dear, and to buy the labor of others cheap, contaminates and debases the character throughout all the departments of life. In fact, no one who has studied human nature will ever expect to find a pure mind, or real virtue, in society, as long as the business of life is one continued attempt to buy cheap and sell dear, by the intervention of money, which itself is daily altering in value.

Any difficulties, however, which may arise from exchanging labor for labor among the producers, through the intervention of labor notes, will be but of short duration; for the knowledge which will accompany this change, and which in some degree will grow out of this practice, will speedily lead to a very improved state of society—to one in which, through a more enlightened system of education, the rising generation will be taught the practice of a much better mode of production, distribution, and consumption, by the means of which they will be enabled to form their children into a very superior order of beings, by training them from infancy to know themselves, and to organize a society in conformity to that knowledge, which will permit and direct them to enjoy, at the point of temperance, all their physical and mental faculties, in evident accordance with the laws of their nature.

For your benefit I now request to ask our legislators and political economists, how it has occurred that you should have received, in about half a century, an aid to your natural powers of production equal to the assistance of 600 millions of well trained laborers, who tire not, who never refuse to work, who require neither food nor clothes, and yet that you should experience a dire necessity to extend the time of your daily labor just in proportion as these millions came to your assistance, from nine hours per day, of comparatively light and healthy occupation, to 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and, as I am told, in the manufacturing districts to 15, and sometimes even to 16 hours per day, of severe and often unhealthy employment, and that you do not now receive the same advantages in return for the 14 or 16 hours of hard labor per day that you readily obtained for your nine hours of comparatively easy labor, before the introduction of these enormous artificial powers?

I now require them to account for the additional productions of these 600 millions of laborers, who are now in full work, without requiring food, or clothing, or education, and to account for your present pecuniary condition, as well as for your very natural fears for the future. I also request them to inform you, why measures have not been recommended, and adopted in practice, to produce the very reverse of these lamentable results? Why, in proportion as these new powers were brought to your aid, your labor did not gradually diminish, from nine hours per day, to eight, to seven, to six, to five, to four, and to three; and why the three hours of labor per day should not now be of more value to you, as they might easily be made more productive than the nine were before the introduction of these enormous mechanical and chemical powers of production?

I request them to inform you how it is, that, under this mighty power, if rightly directed, to produce wealth, promote knowledge, and secure independence, ample beyond the wishes of rational beings, for every one of a population tenfold or twentyfold more numerous than the present numbers in the British Islands, you, the actual producers of all wealth, should be stricken with poverty and with the most fearful forebodings for the future; why the poor rates have increased so enormously, and why crime has extended in every direction? It will be no answer to these questions to say, that "your numbers have increased," for you bring with you at birth the powers to produce, with ease, far more than you con-

sume; and, therefore, under a right direction of these powers, an increase of your numbers ought to increase still more your surplus productions, and consequently require less daily labor from each of you.

And, except where laws and institutions, founded in ignorance, compel the industry and mental faculties of man to take a vicious and unnatural direction, the surplus productions *have* increased every where with the increase of population; and they will continue to increase; as numbers multiply, until every acre of the earth shall be fully cultivated, although there should not be another improvement or discovery made in the sciences of chemistry or mechanism beyond those already known and secured to the public.

Another and a better reply, in answer to the foregoing questions, than "an increase of your numbers," must, therefore, be given, to account for the strange anomaly which Great Britain and Ireland present, of an empire superabounding, through the industry and inventive powers of its inhabitants, in all the necessaries, comforts, and luxuries requisite for human happiness, while the mass of its most industrious population is in hourly fear and trembling for the support of a precarious existence, being overwhelmed with poverty, with poor rates, and with crime.

London, September 7, 1827.

ROBERT OWEN.

P. S. Other principles than those by which this empire has been governed, occurred at an early period of life to me to be true; and, without any motives of faction or of personal consideration, I have never ceased to endeavor to ascertain, whether those early imbibed principles were derived from facts, and therefore founded in truth, or whether my mind had been deluded by error. In the progress of this search after truth I proved the real value of these principles, for I tried them in early life in directing extensive practical measures among a large population in Manchester, and afterward at New Lanark; and I never found them to lead me astray from Nature, or to be unsuccessful in the result, except when they were opposed by the ignorance and prejudice which our ancestors naturally and necessarily transmitted to all of us. These proceedings in Manchester and New Lanark were not hidden from the public, and are well known: in the latter place, I advanced with these experiments to the extent that the ignorance or want of experience of the present times would admit. The principles which appeared to me to be true would not allow of a further advance in practice, without the probability of exciting a greater degree of irritation, anger, and ill will, than I wished to create in a search after truth for the benefit of my fellow creatures. And about this period circumstances very unexpectedly occurred to make it probable that these principles could be more easily tried, to their full extent, in the new settlements of America, than in an old established empire, in which the leading notions by which the policy of the country was governed had been unchanged for many centuries. As the chief object of my life became at this time a desire to ascertain not only the truth of the principles which had been impressed on my mind, but their applicability to practice also, I crossed the Atlantic, and purchased New Harmony, in the state of Indiana, a property well suited in many

respects for the experiment which I had in view. This experiment had been in progress, when I left New Harmony on the 1st of June last, twenty-five months; and, as the whole of my proceedings in America are full of interest to that portion of the public who prefer truth to error, and happiness to misery; I mean to publish a sketch of these transactions as soon as time can be obtained to admit me to complete it.

I further propose, at an early opportunity, to communicate to the public a more full developement of my general views.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Assumption.—On the 16th of August the fete of the Assumption of the Virgin was kept holy in Paris, and a grand procession, in which the royal family participated, called forth the inhabitants in thousands. A correspondent of the London Courier gives an interesting detail of the ceremonies, which he declares to have been “as a public spectacle of magnificence, a miserable failure, and as an act of national religion, a solemn humbug.” The annexed passage, in which the parts played by the royal family are noticed, is highly amusing:

To the Virgin succeeded a long batch of priests and monks, preceding the archbishop of Paris, in his gilt mitre, and archiepiscopal robes of silk and gold; behind the archbishop marched, or rather lounged, the dauphin, bareheaded, in a blue military coat and jack boots, with a broad scarf of light blue silk (the *cordon blue*) strung across one shoulder. His royal highness moved forward with a careless listless gait, twirling his hat and feather, and looking as if he wished to be thought to smile at the humbug of the thing; around him were a crowd of general officers, and young aids-de-camp, who showed by their chattering, and laughing, and winking at the girls in the windows, that they at least felt no great reverence for the solemnity. Next to the dauphin came his majesty Charles the Tenth, dressed like his son, with the exception of the jack boots, with his head uncovered, and hat in hand. On each side of his majesty walked several military officers and functionaries of state, who seemed to feel as much indifference to the ceremonial, as the attendants of the dauphin. After these marched, or rather stalked, the dauphiness, (duchess of Angouleme,) in a white dress, of most comprehensive latitude of flounce, a wide open bonnet, and towering plume of ostrich. Her royal highness moved and looked as if she felt that she was discharging a most important public duty, under circumstances of the most gratifying distinction. You might plainly discover in her haughty pace the pride of the princess—in her clasped hands, the enthusiasm of the devotee—and, in the wanderings of her eye, and the occasional adjustment of her dress, the inextinguishable vanity of the belle: not that she is very beautiful either, nothing more than a large full figure, and fair, strong featured face, indicating a tendency to passion, and a love of authority and command. Her royal highness was followed at some distance by three old ladies, who appeared heartily tired of the transaction from the very outset. But the most interesting part of the spectacle was the king—the

poor king—a mild and amiable looking gentleman, generally absorbed in a profound, but decent, respect for the ceremony in which his sense of religion induced him to appear, and often looking on the crowd with unforced smiles of placid benignity, and evidently anxious to receive, in return, some token of popular recognition and public attachment, but in vain; the crowd, though of the lower order, the very mob proverbially the worshippers of the powers that be—*qui sape dat indignis honores*—the very rabble, on whom their monarch smiled with (I am sure) a sincere benevolence, looked at him in turn with an idle sort of general curiosity, an utter indifference, and a coldness of manner that indicated the existence of a stronger, but suppressed feeling; not a shout was raised, not a *vive* heard, not a white flag, not a pocket handkerchief, waved in salutation to him through the entire day. I thought he seemed disappointed, even distressed, at the popular silence; indeed I am sure he must have been, for his countenance had that expression of mind and temperament, that meekness of spirit, and feebleness of intellect, that delights in the affectionate aid of friendship, and the flattering applause of the people.

St. Antony's Day in Lisbon.—St. Antony is the patron of Lisbon, and the 13th of June, the anniversary of his death, is kept there with more punctuality, and more festivity and rejoicing, than any other holiday throughout the year. For weeks previous, the children in the streets erect altars to his memory, placing a little image of the saint on top, and begging of persons passing by a few reals for St. Antonio. On the evening of the 12th, an altar is erected for him in the Praça de S. Paõla, with a temporary gallery at the one side, which is occupied by a regimental band, who continue playing airs almost without intermission for twenty-four hours; the church bells at a certain hour strike up merry peals; skyrockets are seen shooting up in all directions, and bonfires innumerable are blazing all over the city. It would, perhaps, be difficult to find another city in the world, where, on any occasion, such a number of bonfires are burning at once; and if St. Anthony had performed no other miracle than this—purifying Lisbon, he would for that alone deserve immortality. The city has no such purification, from one end of the year to the other, not even from thunder storms and autumnal torrents, as it has on the night of the 12th of June. Great crowds of people are in the streets till a late hour, listening to the music, amusing themselves with fireworks, and speaking of St. Antonio. St. Antonio is in every one's mouth. "Who is this St. Antonio?" I said to a man who was extolling the magnificence of the scene. "Why, don't you know St. Antonio?" was the reply. "He is the patron of Lisbon; he performed many miracles; he keeps away the plague, and gets husbands to the raparigas (girls.) I have been in Samos, Cephalonia, Corfu, and Turkey—the plague is constantly there, but they have not St. Antonio?" I was about to mention another country, where they have neither the plague nor St. Antonio; but, as it could serve no good purpose to unhinge his faith, even if that had been possible, I made no attempt to undeceive him. The raparigas, I understand, believe firmly in his miraculous power, and put up many a sincere prayer for his friendly intercession. The numbers, certainly, that frequented the churches on the 13th, were much greater than usual; but

whether they were invoking St. Antonio, or the Virgin, none but themselves know. When their prayers are long in being heard, they make no scruple in treating him with great indignity. The common mode of revenge is, to put a cord round the neck of the image, which is to be had in every toy shop, plunge him into a well, and threaten to drown him outright, if he does not grant their request within a certain period.

Mnemonics.—Every time a certain artisan went to confess, he failed not to prepare himself for this act of devotion by beating his wife. "What barbarity! what cowardice!" said one of his neighbors to him, who had often been a hearer and spectator of this periodical broil. "Why do you beat a woman who, assuredly, is not worse than another? You are a scandal to the whole neighborhood!" "Neighbor," said the unfeeling husband, "I have my reasons for acting as I do, and when they are known to you I am sure you will approve of them. I have a very short memory, and do not recollect one fourth of my sins when I am on the point of going to confess, so that there remains for me but one way of remembering them, which is, to beat my wife, who then takes great care to recal them to my memory in the most glaring colors."

Satan.—If the deity, the God of the Christians, fills all space, where is there room for the devil, or Satan? If the designs of God be to save, and the designs of the devil be to counteract and destroy, how can these two opposites exist every where together? If it be true, as the scriptures say, that straight is the gate, and narrow the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it, then the power of the devil is vastly superior to the power of God, for he makes more victims than God can rescue.—*New Harmony Gazette.*

The following publications may be had at the office of the *Correspondent*, No. 15 Chamber street:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath Day—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, Lond. ed., 2 vols. in one—\$1.25.

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THE CORRESPONDENT is published at No. 15 Chamber street. Terms, three dollars per annum, payable in advance.—GEORGE H. EVANS & CO., Printers, 264 Greenwich street, where Printing, in all its branches, is neatly and expeditiously executed, on reasonable terms.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 17.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 17, 1827.

VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CALUMNY REFUTED.

Mr. Editor—As I have been denied defending myself in the *Dover Republican*, which inserted the infamous Christian abuse of Mr. Thayer of the *Essex Gazette*, in addition to his own article of the 7th of August, thereby proclaiming his paper to the stranger, foreigner, and subscriber a paper for abuse without redress, I am happy to meet with so suitable a vehicle as your *Correspondent* to reply in, and which I did not know existed until the *Zion's Herald* at Boston informed me, in his article on my advertisement which appeared in the *Dover Gazette* on July 31st, the 7th no., vol. 2d of which came to me by post, unlooked for, on September 12th.

The priests have taken the alarm at my list of moral blasphemy appearing in a country of impure puritans; and Mr. Thayer, in his Christian charity, "which suffereth long and is kind," "is not easily provoked," "thinketh no evil," "rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth," has designated me a *wretch*, and called upon my employers to "frown indignantly" upon me. Such is his idea of Christian "civilization." Though he feigns to give "no cause to liberalists to complain of persecution," yet, as far as his pen could do it, he has endeavored to deprive my family of support, because I have conscientiously, with a view to public good, called their attention to the discovery of righteousness, which is *truth*, and have dared to exercise my right of advertising, in this free country, without consulting or asking permission from any one but the printer, and lay before the public the bare names of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge.

They have advertised for me gratis that which Mr. Mann, of the *Dover Republican*, refused to do for payment; and have, agreeably to my motto and wish, contributed to excite inquiry and promote the sale of my books, by the means used to deter their circulation. It has been the practice of priests in all ages to the present day, whether Jew, pagan, Mahometan, or Christian, to denounce that which is opposed to the foundation of their religious dogmas, similar to the *Zion's Herald*, as "the demoralizing works of infidel writers;" and the editor affects to be astonished that any respectable paper in the United States should insert both sides of an important public question. To have the manliness to be liberal and impartial; "to be bold enough to be honest and honest enough to be bold," he bewails as a proof of depravity. The priestly *Pertmouth N. H. Repository* uses the same cant phrase of "demoralizing trash," and says "they are a set of the worst books ever printed," in his article on

my advertisement, which he styles "Unblushing Infidelity." The *Essex Gazette* denounces them as "horrid blasphemy and disgusting obscenity."

I know of no "demoralizing trash" or "disgusting obscenity" in the books I have advertised, unless it be such as may be extracted from the Bible, and exposed as such. I can assure these Christian editors that their religion is as "horrid blasphemy" to me as mine may be to them. It is the duty of the moralist to blaspheme that which he considers to be false; but the blasphemy which is founded in *truth* cannot be "horrid;" and truth is not to be discovered by a partial prejudice to *one side* of the question, but by a careful, industrious examination of both. These publications were written to show that religion and morality cannot associate together any more than falsehood and truth can associate; that the Christian religion is physically and historically untrue; and, if so, it must be the "demoralizing trash," and the "profession" of it a degradation or "*discredit*" to the *lives* of its votaries, because the vice of idolatry is a degradation to man.

I know of no book that describes more pointed obscenity than is to be found in the Bible; and, were some of these scenes to be delineated by the painter, they would form fit subjects to embellish a brothel. Besides the demoralizing, horrid freaks of wholesale butchery attributed to the being whose tender mercies are said to be over all his works; the shameful incest of Lot and his daughters—of Judah and Tamar, Absaham, his wife, and his servant maid Hagar—the scenes described at Sodom, and the Levite's concubine—Absalom going in unto his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel—the ravishment of Tamar by her brother Ammon, and of Dinah by Shechem, and the "disgusting" story of Onan. As well may the priests call the amorous songs of the present day typical of Christ and his church as Solomon's songs; and it is but rare the most vulgar describe sexual intercourse so plain as Solomon and Ezekiel. See chap. 1st verse 18th, chap. 7th v. 1st, chap. 2d v. 6th of "Solomon's Songs," and chap. 23d, v. 3d of "Ezekiel." If the periodical edited by Richard Carlile, entitled "The Moralist," which incorporates the moral precepts of the Bible, excluding its immorality, and contains original moral essays, with the wise maxims and moral essays of the ancient philosophers; if this be one of the "bad books," then the Bible must be a shocking bad one, indeed.

The Boston *Zion's Herald* asks, "What will a generous, patriotic, high minded lover of his country think when he reads in a newspaper that a *caricature* print of 'the Bible God,' the glorious being on whom his fathers and Washington called, and in whom they trusted, might be purchased for 22 cents? This subject concerns the patriot and moralist as well as the devoted Christian." Mr. Thayer likewise "appeals to the patriotic, the moral, and religious feelings," and Mr. Mann says the correctness of Mr. Thayer's remarks is *unquestionable*.

It is paying but a poor compliment to republican patriotism, or to the "*high minded* lover of his country" and moralist, to say that it consists in endeavoring to prohibit a free investigation into the merits of the established institutions and habits around him. As an advocate for free discussion, and having risked prosecution for the open vending of publica-

tions advocating the republican principles of this government in a monarchical country, I question but that I may lay as great a claim to the title of generous, patriotic, high minded lover of mankind as any of the priests of the *Zion's Herald*. As falsehood is immoral, he acts the part of an immoral man, and is the low minded misanthropist that endeavors to retard the progress or the developement of truth by prohibiting free discussion. As truth can only be discovered by free inquiry, it is the duty of the moralist even to make sacrifices to support it, because his interest is allied to the public welfare.

It is to the priests, and the ignorance of men generally, that we are indebted for such hideous representations of God as are to be found in the books called *holy*. If the print of the Bible God be a "*caricature*," his Bible description is one. 'This god of the Jews and Christians, or the trinity in unity, is sketched from Rev. chap. 1st, v. 13, 14, 15, 16; Psalms chap. 18th, v. 8, 11, and Habbakuk chap. 3, v. 4. The intolerants in England attempted to prosecute for the vending of this print; but Mr. Hobler, a lawyer, told the mayor of London it could not be done without prosecuting the vending of the Bible, also. As well may the engraving of the Hindoo deity Ganesa (which appeared in No. 11 of the Wesleyan Missionary quarterly paper for March, 1823) be called a *caricature* by the Hindoos, as this print. Both are founded in ignorance, though they profess to be emblematical. The elephant's head of the "Hindoo God of Wisdom" is as consistent as the two edged sword and the horns coming out of the hands of this print; and the custom of invoking his protection on all occasions is similar to the Christian.

Richard Carlile, of London, the publisher of this print, says, in his *Republican*, vol. 13, no. 1, "I perceive it to be a fair sketch of certain descriptions found in a book which we call the Bible, and by no means a '*caricature*,' nor exhibited by me as a likeness of *any thing in existence*." And "The print is an exhibition of the ignorance of mankind about the questions of those powers, or that power, which they concentrate under the name of God or Deity. By me it is meant to instruct and not to offend." And, in no. 2, vol. 11, he says, "I have seen religious descriptions of the Bible God quite as ridiculous as this print. In one Bible, I have seen the God made with a face as the sun is drawn, and all the lower limbs clad in armor. In a Roman catholic missal, I have seen the Holy Ghost *overshadowing* the *Virgin Mary*; and the representation was that of *sexual intercourse*, the middle of the body being enveloped in a cloud." [Here is Christian *obscenity* and *horrid blasphemy* for you, Mr. Thayer.] "Doctor Parkhurst has a representation of the Deity, I am informed, with *four heads* and a *cloven foot*, as mentioned in the book of Revelations. If my print of the Deity be taken into a court of law, I must take with me all the similar prints published by other persons; and a pretty collection it shall be." His Satanic Majesty would likewise have been exhibited, if as creditable authority as a Bible description of him could have been found. Dr. Parkhurst's Deity may do for him, as it displays a *cloven foot*.

It is not to the *example* of my "fathers," or to Washington, that we must look as a proof of the existence of a supernatural intelligent being called God, but to the demonstration of the existence of such a "glorious

being in whom they trusted." What *knowledge* have my fathers or Washington communicated to the world in proof of their Deity! None that I know of. Nor am I aware that "the light of the philosophy" of my fathers, of Washington, or of any of the priests of the present day, is any thing but "a baneful gleam, to bewilder and lead to ruin" or idolatry. If they have communicated any thing more than supposition, or ignorance, I for one should be happy to be informed. In the absence of *knowledge* for its foundation, it must be idolatry, and the doctors in divinity mere quacks in their profession. It is even more degrading to man than the pagan worship of the sun, as there is more reason for feeling a reverence to a tangible object, the source of vegetation, than in rendering ourselves slaves to the Bible Deity.

To show how deliberately these Christian editors can assert without the least inquiry, Mr. Thayer tells his readers that "he believes Carile is not yet liberated," and that "the sale of his books was suppressed;" and the *Repository* says, "they are same for the publication of which Carile was punished in England." Mr. Thayer's belief and that of the people of England are at variance in this instance, for the newspapers had much to say on his liberation, and on so extraordinary an imprisonment of six years for the publication of only two of these "same" publications—Paine's *Age of Reason* and Palmer's *Principles of Nature*. Mr. Carile was liberated on Nov. 18th, 1825. I was in company with him in April last, and saw him after a visit to some of his friends in the country for the benefit of his health. He was quite recovered, and no doubt will do the priests much more mischief. His shop has been kept open, and his publications have been sold freely before and since his imprisonment. It is one of the best book shops in appearance and *moral* worth in London.

I consider it my duty to make this public statement that I did not compromise with the Dover Manufacturing Company, as the editor of the *Dover Republican* (or some one else for him) insinuated, by saying "the paper containing the advertisement did not reach the presiding officer in Boston until Friday last. A *special* meeting of the board of directors was called the same evening, and a committee appointed to visit Dover, who, by availing themselves of the mail stage, arrived on Saturday noon. The subject has since been fully investigated, and we believe the community may rest satisfied that any exertions to infuse the *poison* of *atheism* into the public mind will prove abortive." The *Repository* of the 16th of August echos the above preamble, in substance, and finishes by saying "The *Dover Republican* states that the effort to spread moral poison will be ineffectual." I can assure these editors that "the community may rest satisfied" I have unreservedly sold these publications since my advertisement, (which appeared as often as I contracted for,) and will continue to sell them, as a matter of fair play and free discussion, until I am convinced of religion being well founded. I have done this in the face of a government partly composed of a set of bloated, hypocritical tithe eaters, and at a time when the hag superstition was glutting herself with victims; and shall I be denied my *right* and *liberty* of free discussion in this so much boasted free country!

Mr. Thayer says he "hopes they will frown indignantly on the wretch who has the hardihood thus to attempt the destruction of their religious

and civil institutions—to invalidate the obligations which religion and morality impose—and, finally, to destroy the best hopes of man as a social and immortal being.” My *hardihood* in opposition to religious institutions proceeds from as pure motives as the hardihood of the primitive Christians in opposition to the pagan idolatry. But what have I attempted against your *civil* institutions. It was your republican system of government, and the opportunity this gave of promulgating truth, that allured me to accept of my present engagement. I only wish “to invalidate” that which is ill founded, and only “to destroy” such *hopes* as are chimerical. The “obligations that *morality* imposes” I know it is my interest and duty to attend to, because on them rest the happiness and well being of mankind. But I know nothing of the obligations of *religion* that relate to morality. To me it appears separate from morality—allied to falsehood; and that man cannot call himself a lover of truth, but acts immorally, who attempts to retard free discussion. Unrestrained inquiry is the only way to beat down bad systems, and make virtue predominate over vice.

It is not true that my motive was to “give myself *currency*” by claiming a connexion with the Dover Manufacturing Company, and “avowing myself as their pattern designer,” as the *Repository* states; yet I will admit it may appear so. I did it as a matter of address, as the street I reside in is new and nameless, built and tenanted this summer. I found myself at a loss for a proper address: I could have given myself *currency* in the same way in England if I had had the motive attributed to me; but I did not require it, nor do I now. I am sorry I did so avow myself; but it no more than *true*. The *Repository* says, “this foreigner ought to have known, before he set foot in New England, that this is a Christian country, and that Christians look upon such men as he is with feelings of mingled pity and disgust.” That foreigner knew, long before he engaged himself for Dover, the character of the place he was coming to; and, the more Christian it was, the greater the necessity for anti-Christian publications; so that “the man has certainly (*not*) mistaken his market.” Wherever Christianity exists is the right market; and, though you may boast of your missionary progress, and reviving the superstitious and ignorant to the practice of Christianity, you only pull down one idolatry to set up another; while “infidels nearer home” are increasing, and becoming more formidable as knowledge spreads. Your “good tidings,” which have been only *good* to the priests, and “everlasting gospel,” which will only *last* so long as you can keep people ignorant, have been well discussed publicly in England, and exposed as false in all their bearings. That discussion rebounds on America, and will find its way wherever your missionaries have carried their knapsacks, until the “*hag superstition*” be banished from civilized nations and give place to the Goddess of Reason, which will consummate the true millennium of man.

I should suppose the *Repository* is opposed to the missionary system, as the missionaries might be told by those to whom they are sent the same as he tells me, that they ought to have known theirs was not a Christian country, and that they looked upon them with pity and disgust. Until I am convinced of the truth of religion in any shape, I

must look upon it and its professors with as great "pity and disgust" as they say they look on me and my opinions.

JOSEPH LAWTON.

Dover, N. H., Nov. 3d, 1827.

THE QUESTIONS OF ZAPATA.

From the French of Voltaire.

Continued from page 234.

54. You will perhaps have the goodness to inform me how the devil was enabled to fly away with God; and likewise in what part of Galilee the hill was situated whereon they alighted, and from which they could perceive all the kingdoms in the world. The account of the devil promising all these kingdoms to God, provided he would fall down and worship his satanic majesty, may be severely criticised by those who merely take common sense for their guide; a few words, then, in recommendation of this marvellous story, will not be at all superfluous.

55. I request of you, also, as you are in the habit of attending marriage feasts, to tell me how God, who also went to a marriage feast, could condescend to turn the water into wine for the use of those who were already inebriated.

56. When, towards the end of July, you may be seated at the breakfast table enjoying the delicious flavor of the fig, I hope you will not refuse to explain to me, why God, when he found himself hungry, sought for figs at the commencement of March, which was not the season for figs.

57. After all these sort of prodigies have been explained, and the truth of them demonstrated, it will then be necessary for me to state that God was condemned to be crucified for the original sin. But suppose it should be replied that the question of original sin was never found to be hinted at either in the Old or the New Testament; that it is only said Adam was condemned to die on the day on which he should eat of the tree of knowledge, but that in fact he did not die; and that Augustine, bishop of Hippo, the *ci-devant* manicheen, was the first who broached the system of original sin: I declare, that, not having for my auditors the people of Hippo, I may make myself appear very ridiculous, by talking much and yet saying nothing to the purpose. For when certain disputants explain to me that it was impossible God should be punished for an apple that was eaten four thousand years before his execution took place; that it was impossible that in ransoming the human race he should not ransom it, but leave the whole of it, with the exception of a few elect personages, within the fangs of the devil; I can only reply to this by some empty verbosity, and then shall be obliged to conceal myself through shame.

58. Communicate to me your enlightened ideas respecting the prediction made by our Lord, as recorded in the twenty-first chapter of St. Luke. Jesus says expressly that he will come in the clouds with great power and magnificence, before the generation to whom he addresses himself shall have passed away. He has, however, falsified his words, for he did not come in the clouds. If indeed he did come mounted on some of the dense vapors that float around our globe, it must be acknowledged we know nothing

of it: inform me what you know respecting this matter. Paul the apostle says also to his Thessalonian disciples, that they shall sail on the clouds along with him in order to meet the Lord Jesus. Why did they not make this voyage? Is it more difficult to sail on the clouds than to mount to the third heaven? I beg your pardon, but I must confess I like the clouds of Aristophanes far better than those of St. Paul.

59. Shall I assert with St. Luke that Jesus ascended into heaven from the little village of Bethany? or shall I insinuate with St. Matthew that he took his stupendous flight from Galilee? or shall I urge the opinion of a certain grave doctor, who said that Jesus had one foot in Galilee and the other in Bethany, when he started for the empyreum? This opinion appears to me to be the most probable; however, as regards this matter, I wait for your decision.

60. I shall perhaps be asked whether St. Peter was ever at Rome. I shall make answer that without doubt he was pope there for twenty-five years; and the grand reason I shall give for this assertion is, that we have extant an epistle of this good man, who did not know either how to read or to write, and that this epistle is dated from Babylon. There can be no replying to this, but I wish I had something to urge that was even still more convincing.

61. Inform me why the creed which is denominated the apostle's creed was not written till the time of Jerome and Rufin, four hundred years after the time of the apostles? Tell me, also, for what reason the first fathers of the church never quote any other evangelists than those that at this day are called apocryphal? Is not this an evident proof that the four canonical books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were not then in existence?

62. Are you not grieved, as well as myself, that the primitive Christians should have forged so many execrable verses, and have attributed them to the Sibyls; that they should have forged the letters of St. Paul to Seneca, the letters of Jesus, the letters of Mary, the letters of Pilate; and that they should thus have established their sect by a hundred crimes which it is customary to award punishment to in all the tribunals of the world? These frauds are well known at this day to all the *scavans*. The Christians are obliged to denominate them pious; but is it not a grievous thing that your truth should thus owe its foundation to the vilest falsehood?

63. As Jesus did not institute seven sacraments, wherefore have we seven sacraments? As Jesus did not say that he was threefold, that he had two natures and two wills with one person, why do we describe him with one person and two natures? and, if he was possessed of two wills, why had he not the will to instruct us in the dogmas of the Christian religion?

And, since he has said that among his disciples there should be neither first nor last, why has his grace the archbishop of Toledo a salary of a million ducats, while mine is reduced to a mere competence?

64. I know very well that the church is infallible: but is it the Greek church, or the Latin church, or that of England, or that of Denmark and Sweden, or that of the grand city of Neufchatel, or that of those people called quakers, or that of the anabaptists, or that of the mora-

vians? The Turkish church is also to be much commended, but it is said that that of the Chinese claims a far greater antiquity.

65. Is the pope infallible at all times; that is, when he sleeps with his mistress, lies locked in the embraces of his own daughter, or when he procures a bottle of poisoned wine for the cardinal Cornetto?*

When two councils anathematize each other, a circumstance that has happened twenty times, which council has then the exclusive claim to infallibility?

66. After all, would it not be far better to steer clear of these labyrinths, and simply preach on the efficacy of virtue? When God shall judge us, I much doubt if he will put the questions to us, Whether grace be versatile or concomitant? Whether marriage is the visible sign of a thing invisible? Whether we believe there are ten choirs of angels, or only nine? Whether the pope is above the council, or the council above the pope? Can it be a crime in the sight of God to have prayed to him in Spanish, when we had no knowledge of the Latin language? Must we be the objects of his eternal wrath, on account of having eaten on a certain day at the cost of twelve maravedis some very indifferent meat? and should we have been recompensed to all eternity, if we had dined along with you, most learned masters, on turbot, soles, and sturgeons, at the charge of one hundred piastres? You do not in reality believe all this: you think that God will judge us according to our works, and not according to the ideas of *Thomas* or of *Bonaventure*.

Shall I not render a service to mankind by announcing to them only the duties of morality? Morality in itself is so pure, so holy, so universal, so clear, of such antiquity, that it seems as though it emanated from the Deity, like to the light which is considered as the first of his works. Has not the Deity endowed man with the strong feelings of self love in order that he might pay regard to his own conversation; with benevolence and virtue that he might be able to restrict those feelings to their proper boundaries? Has he not made man subject to those kinds of wants that make it necessary for him to seek society? Has he not created him with a sense of pleasure that he might feel enjoyment, and made him liable to painful sensations to teach him to enjoy with moderation those passions that often lead to great achievements? and has he not also given us reason, the best of gifts, that we might curb these passions, and conduct ourselves properly in all respects?

Has he not, in fine, inspired all men who are united in society, with the idea of a Supreme Being, in order that the adoration paid to that Being should be the strongest link in the chain which binds society together? The savages who wander amidst the woods have no need of this knowledge; the duties of society of which they are ignorant cannot regard them; but as soon as men have assembled themselves together God manifests himself to their reason; they require that justice should be administered, they therefore adore in him the principles of all justice. God, who has no need of their own vain adoration, receives it as being necessary for them, and not for himself. With the same beneficence he implants in men a genius for the arts, without which all society would be

* Pope Alexander the Sixth is here alluded to.

annihilated ; he infuses into them the spirit of religion, the first and most natural of sciences, a science which is assuredly divine and whose principle is certain, although we draw from it uncertain consequences every day of our lives. Will you permit me to proclaim these important truths to the world ?

67. If you would wish me to conceal the truth, if you give me your orders absolutely to announce the miracles of St. John in Galicia, and of Our Lady of Atocha, and of Maria d'Agreda, who, in her ecstasies, exhibited her hinder parts to the little boys, tell me how I am to deal with those refractory persons who shall presume to entertain doubts ? Will it be necessary for me to edify them, by putting them to the question ordinary and extraordinary ? When I happen to fall in with some young Jewesses, ought I to enjoy them in a carnal way before I conduct them to the flames ? And when they are brought to the stake, have I not a right to possess myself of a thigh or a buttock to feast on at supper, to which I may invite some young wenches of the true catholic faith ? I wait for the honor of your reply.

DOMINICO ZAPATA.

Zapata having waited in vain for an answer, set himself about preaching simply on the subject of the Deity. He proclaimed to men the benevolent Author of Nature, the Liberal Remunerator, the Just Punisher, and Merciful Pardoner. He disengaged the important truths from the mass of falsehood ; he separated religion from fanaticism ; he taught and practised virtue. He was mild, benevolent, and modest ; and was, according to the custom, burnt at Valladolid, in the year of grace, 1531.

Let us pray for the soul of Brother Zapata.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE EIGHTH.

Continued from page 250.

“V. 8. And Cain talked with his brother: And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.” Here, then, are the dreadful consequences of that *partiality* which God evinced on the very first act of religious worship said to have been paid to him. The unjust preference given to Abel rouses the indignation of Cain ; a quarrel ensues, and murder is the consequence. A religion, said to have a merciful and just God for its author, represents him, in its very commencement, as a hater of justice—a partial, cruel, vindictive tyrant—whose laws, instead of establishing peace and concord on earth, deprave the heart ; excite to the commission of the most terrible crimes ; transform mankind into ferocious beasts ; the most monstrous passions into divine attributes ; and ascribe to Deity, as perfections, what constitute the most horrid enormities among men.

Having this example constantly before them, the clergy have at all times promoted dissension, war, and bloodshed for the sake of religion. True to the maxim "I came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword," have they not frequently torn in pieces the bonds of filial and paternal affection, and converted them into inexorable fury and hatred! How often have they nerved the arm of the brother against the brother—of the father against the son, and the son against the father. How often have they destroyed all peace and unanimity in society, and produced the most afflicting ravages! And all this in imitation of the example of a sanguinary deity, who, to evince his despotic disposition, his caprice, and how much he is gratified with scenes of blood, instituted a form of religion, which, in its very outset, caused the murder of one of its votaries, whose manner of worship did not happen to please him.

The author of the book of Genesis, supposing it necessary to inflict some punishment on Cain, represents the Lord as inquiring of the murderer where his brother was, as if omnipotence stood in need of such information. Even after the blood of the deceased is said to have cried from the ground, God could not understand the import of this cry until he had examined the criminal. "And the Lord God said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?" Cain having denied all knowledge of him, the Lord, affecting great wrath at so atrocious a deed, thus denounces him: "And now thou art cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield to thee her strength: a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out, this day, from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth: and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should slay him. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch."

So far from this passage warranting the opinion which some have entertained, that Cain was *punished* for murdering his brother, it seems to imply that this bloody deed rendered him an object of greater consideration with the Almighty than he was before. At first, no doubt, the Lord utters curses on his head—tells him that the earth would be unproductive under his cultivation—and pronounces him a fugitive and a vagabond. But, if the earth had not produced, how came Cain to obtain a subsistence? And, if he was really a fugitive and a vagabond—words which imply a wandering, unsettled, and disreputable life—how came he to prevail on any decent female to marry him? How did he persuade other people to assist him, not only in building a city, but to associate with such a reprobate? And how came Cain himself, notwithstanding the fiat of omnipotence, to get rid of his fugitive and vagabond habits so effectually as to be capable of planning and superintending the building

of a city, and to devote himself to domestic habits? All this surely bespeaks the reverse of punishment. But the *mark* on his forehead. What then? We are not told what that mark was. It must certainly have been something better calculated to render him a desirable object, than an object of terror; because, instead of pointing him out as a murderer, meriting punishment, it acted as a talisman, to prevent every one who saw it from injuring his person. It is said that he "went out from the presence of the Lord." This would seem to imply that God does not possess omniscience, and that there are parts of the earth which are beyond his sight—an opinion that seems to be countenanced by his descending into the garden of Eden to seek for Adam, and his paying occasional visits to our globe to ascertain by actual observation the condition of man.

But the most extraordinary circumstance is, how Cain got a wife, and found people to assist him to build a city at a time when there were only *three* inhabitants on the face of the earth—Adam, Eve, and himself; for it is not until we come to the fifth chapter of Genesis we find it stated that Eve was delivered of her *third* child. The obvious conclusion is, that there must have been other people on the earth besides the descendants of Adam and Eve, from among whom Cain selected a wife. Even according to the Bible story, there is reason for believing that the author of the first four books of Genesis intended to give an account of *two* different creations of human beings. The first he makes the head of the whole human race; and the second, to flatter the vanity of the Jews, he makes to be the head of their family, whom God had created to teach the surrounding nations that he wished, by giving them a distinct origin, to distinguish his favorite people. In the 1st chapter of Genesis, man is said to have been formed by the *word of God*. No restrictions were imposed on this creation as to food. "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed upon the earth, and *all trees*, which have in them seed according to their kind, that it may be to you for meat." In the 2d chapter, Adam is said to have been formed of the *dust of the earth*; and he is expressly prohibited from eating of a certain tree, under pain of death.

In the first creation, man and woman were formed *at the same moment*, and the sexes distinguished by the terms *male* and *female*. But it was not till after a helpmate could not be found for Adam that God said, "Let us make a helper like unto himself;" and having lulled Adam asleep, a rib was taken from his side, and a being made of it, which Adam, and not her maker, called *woman*.

Taking this view of the subject, we have two distinct creations, which easily reconciles the difficulty respecting Cain's wife: but then it goes to destroy the Christian dogmas founded on the fall of Adam. Were it to be admitted that there have been men on the earth who descended from a different parent, the doctrine of Jesus dying for the whole human race would fall to pieces. This is, doubtless, a dilemma into which Christianity would be involved. But it is not our province to reconcile contradictions. Either it is true that there were other people on the earth besides Adam and Eve and their descendants, or the story of Cain's marriage, and his building a city, must be considered a fable. If, on the

contrary, as the text plainly imports, there were people then existing in a different part of the world, it follows that the doctrine of all men having sinned in Adam, and of atonement made for them through the sacrifice of Jesus, must be abandoned. There is no escaping from this alternative.

But, leaving it to the priesthood to clear up this point, it cannot admit of a dispute, much less a denial, that the story of Cain and Abel is the Egyptian story of Typhon and Osiris, which the writer of Genesis has evidently copied. Cain and Abel are brothers: so are Typhon and Osiris. In like manner, Typhon, who is the elder, kills Osiris the younger. The story is an allegory on darkness and light. Typhon, the elder brother, is darkness, because darkness was supposed to be more ancient than light. Osiris is the good light, who rules during the summer months, and brings forth the fruits of the earth, and is the favorite, as Abel is said to have been, for which Typhon hates him. And when the winter comes, and cold and darkness overspread the earth, Typhon is represented as having killed Osiris out of malice, as Cain is said to have killed Abel.

Thus, in every step of this inquiry, new and incontrovertible proofs offer themselves in support of the mythological origin of Christianity, and of its being, with some slight alterations, a compound of the Persian, Hindostan, and other oriental religions, that existed, and influenced millions of human beings for ages before the Jews, even according to their own writings, were recognised as a people. Is it not a deplorable fact, and one which marks the bigotry and ignorance now prevailing, that, although Christians of all denominations cordially agree in execrating the descendants of Abraham, they are all equally zealous and united in maintaining, that the sacred books of the Jews, which so clearly betray the source whence they came, are nevertheless of divine origin. To accuse a people of being ignorant, credulous, and incorrigible, the enemies of God, whose eternal reprobation they had incurred, and with the same breath to extol their books as models of perfection, and that on their own word, too, is an anomaly that cannot be reconciled with any ideas of the existence of a general disposition to acquire correct knowledge. Why is it that mankind are thus wedded to opinions which, were they to reflect only for a moment, would appear in all their native deformity? Why is it that they persist in being hoodwinked, and consider those their enemies who would tear the bandage from their eyes, and show them the light? It is because the priesthood, who are enemies to all inquiry, have had the charge of forming their minds in infancy, and have succeeded by terror in persuading them that to doubt the mysteries of religion would incur the displeasure of the Almighty in this world, and his eternal wrath in that which is to come. Amid this extensive depravation of intellect, this mental servility to the most arrogant and useless body of men that can infest society, it must be a source of pleasure to all intelligent minds, that the efforts we are making to disseminate correct principles are every day attended with the most cheering results; and that there does not at this moment exist a doubt, if we persevere in our present course, that the triumph of these principles will be completed much sooner than the most ardent friend of mental improvement now anticipates.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Bible.—The following chapters and verses, selected from the Old and New Testament, are particularly recommended to all serious, modest, virtuous, and moral females, and to the patronesses and female supporters of Bible Societies, being portions of the book which they strenuously recommend, as containing the only *pure* system of morality, and the best calculated for the moral instruction of the youth of both sexes, but more particularly the female sex.

OLD TESTAMENT.

	Chapters	Verses		Chapters	Verses		
Genesis	16	1 to 16	2 Kings	9	8		
	19	8	36	Esther	3	4	
	20	1	13	Job	31	9	10
	30	14	18	Proverbs	30	15	20
	34	1	31	Songs of Solomon	1 to 8		
	35	22		Isaiah	3	17	
	38	8	30		47	1	3
	39	7	18	Jeremiah	3	1	9
Leviticus	15	15	33		5	7	8
	18	1	30		11	13	15
	20	1	27		13	26	27
Numbers	25	1			30	6	
	25	6	8		31	22	27
	31	17	35	Ezekiel	4	1	17
Deuteronomy	22	13	30		16	1	63
	23	1, 13, 17, 18			22	9	12
	25	5	12		23	1	49
Joshua	5				36	17	
Judges	19	1	30	Hosea	1	1	11
	21	1	25	Joel	2	20	
1 Samuel	25	1	44		3	3	
2 Samuel	11	1	27	Amos	2	7	
	13	1	39	Micah	1	11	
	16	20	23	Nahum	3	4	6
1 Kings	11	1	4	Habakkuk	2	15	16

NEW TESTAMENT.

	Chapters	Verses		Chapters	Verses		
Epistle of Paul to the Romans	1	25 to 28	1 Timothy	5	11		
1 Corinthians	7	1	5	Revelations	2	20	22
1 Timothy	1	10		3	18		

OLD TESTAMENT.

Chapters to be read by all humane, moral, and reflecting persons, both male and female.

	Chapters		Chapters
Genesis	34	1 Samuel	15
Numbers	31	2 Samuel	12, 21
Joshua	8, 10	1 Kings	2
Judges	4, 5, 20, 21	2 Kings	10

The Inquisition.—Tavernier, in his *Travels*, inform us, that a man of letters, who had fallen into the hands of the inquisitors, said, that nothing troubled him so much as the *ignorance* of the inquisitor and his council when they put any question; so that he was inclined to believe that not one of them had really *read the scriptures*!

It was only as far back as the year 1761, that Gabriel Malagrida, an old man of seventy, was burnt by these *evangelical executioners*! His trial was printed at Amsterdam, 1762, from the Lisbon copy. And for what was this unhappy Jesuit condemned? Not, as some have imagined, for his having been concerned in a conspiracy against the king of Portugal. No other charge is laid to him in this trial but that of having indulged certain heretical notions, which any other tribunal would have looked upon as the delirious fancies of an old fanatic.

The people stand so much in fear of this diabolical tribunal, that parents deliver up their children, husbands their wives, and masters their servants, to its officers, without daring to murmur. The prisoners are kept for a long time, till they themselves turn their own accusers, and declare the cause of their imprisonment; for they are neither told their crime nor confronted with witnesses. As soon as they are imprisoned, their friends go into mourning, and speak of them as dead, not daring to solicit their pardon, lest they should be brought in as accomplices. When there is no shadow of proof against the pretended criminal, he is discharged after suffering the most cruel tortures, a tedious and dreadful imprisonment, and the loss of the greatest part of his effects.

The following passages from the narrative of Mr. Dellon, who had been thrown into the inquisition at *Goa*, and confined in a dungeon of ten feet square, upwards of two years, without seeing any person but the gaoler who brought him his victuals, except when he was brought to trial, for the *alleged crime of charging this merciful tribunal with cruelty*, afford a pretty tolerable idea how far such a charge might have been made with justice, and is truly descriptive of that dread sacrifice,

“which had with horror shock’d

“The darkest pagans, offer’d to their gods.”

“During the months of November and December, I heard, every morning, the shrieks of the unfortunate victims, who were undergoing the *question*. I remembered to have heard, before I was cast into prison, that the *Auto da Fe* was generally celebrated on the first Sunday in Advent, because on that day is read in the churches that part of the gospel in which mention is made of the *last judgment*; and the inquisitors pretend by this ceremony to exhibit a lively emblem of that awful event. I was likewise convinced that there were a great number of prisoners, besides myself; the profound silence, which reigned within the walls of the building, having enabled me to count the number of doors which were opened at the hours of meals. However, the first and second Sundays of Advent passed by, without my hearing of any thing, and I prepared to undergo another year of melancholy captivity, when I was aroused from my despair on the 11th of January, by the noise of the guards removing the bars from the door of my prison. The *alcaide* presented me with a habit, which he ordered me to put on, and to make myself ready to attend him, when he should come again. Thus saying, he left a lighted lamp in my

dungeon. The guards returned about two o'clock in the morning, and led me out into a long gallery, where I found a number of the companions of my fate, drawn up in a rank against a wall: I placed myself among the rest, and several more soon joined the melancholy band. The profound silence and stillness caused them to resemble statues more than the animated bodies of human creatures. The women, who were clothed in a similar manner, were placed in a neighboring gallery, where we could not see them; but I remarked that a number of persons stood by themselves at some distance, attended by others who wore long black dresses, and who walked backwards and forwards occasionally. I did not then know who these were: but I was afterwards informed that the former were the victims who were condemned to be burned, and the others were their confessors.

"After we were all ranged against the wall of this gallery, we received each a large wax taper. They then brought us a number of dresses made of yellow cloth, with the cross of St. Andrew painted before and behind. This is called the *San Benito*. The relapsed heretics wear another species of robe, called the *samarra*, the ground of which is grey. The portrait of the sufferer is painted upon it, placed upon burning torches, with flames and demons all around. Caps were then produced, called *carrechas*, made of pasteboard, pointed like sugar loaves, all covered over with devils and flames of fire.

"The great bell of the cathedral began to ring a little before sunrise, which served as a signal to warn the people of Goa to come and behold the august ceremony of the Auto da Fe; and then they made us proceed from the gallery one by one. I remarked, as we passed into the great hall, that the inquisitor was sitting at the door with his secretary by him, and that he delivered every prisoner into the hands of a particular person, who is to be his guard to the place of burning. These persons are called *parains*, or *godfathers*. My godfather was the commander of a ship. I went forth with him, and, as soon as we were in the street, I saw that the procession was commenced by the Dominican friars; who have this honor, because St. Dominic founded the inquisition. These are followed by the prisoners, who walk one after the other, each having his godfather by his side, and a lighted taper in his hand. The least guilty go foremost; and, as I did not pass for one of them, there were many who took precedence of me. The women were mixed promiscuously with the men. We all walked barefoot, and the sharp stones of the streets of Goa wounded my tender feet, and caused the blood to stream; for they made us march through the chief streets of the city; and we were regarded every where by an innumerable crowd of people, who had assembled from all parts of India to behold this spectacle; for the inquisition takes care to announce it long before, in the most remote parishes. At length we arrived at the church of St. Francis, which was, for this time, destined for the celebration of the Act of Faith. On one side of the altar, was the grand inquisitor and his counsellors; and on the other, the viceroy of Goa and his court. All the prisoners are seated to hear a sermon. I observed that those prisoners who wore the horrible *carrechas* came in last in the procession. One of the Augustin monks ascended the pulpit, and preached for a quarter of an hour. The sermon being concluded, two

readers went up to the pulpit, one after the other, and read the sentences of the prisoners. *My joy was extreme when I heard that my sentence was not to be burnt, but to be a galley slave for five years.* After the sentences were read, they summoned forth those miserable victims who were destined to be immolated by the holy inquisition. The images of the heretics who had died in prison were brought up at the same time, their bones being contained in small chests, covered with flames and demons. An officer of the secular tribunal now came forward, and seized these unhappy people, after they had each received a *slight blow upon the breast* from the alcaide, to intimate that they were *abandoned*. They were then led to the bank of the river, where the viceroy and his court were assembled, and where the faggots had been prepared the preceding day. As soon as they arrive at this place, the condemned persons are asked in what religion they choose to die; and, the moment they have replied to this question, the executioner seizes them, and binds them to a stake in the midst of the faggots. The day after the execution, the portraits of the dead are carried to the church of the Dominicans. The heads only are represented, (which are generally very accurately drawn; for the inquisition keeps excellent limners for the purpose,) surrounded by flames and demons; and underneath is the name and crime of the person who has been burned."

On reading the above account, we may be at a loss to decide which should most excite our indignation and surprise—the pitiful evasion which these wolves, in sheeps' clothing have recourse to, in order to avoid the imputation of shedding men's blood, by substituting fire and faggot for the more merciful operation of the axe;* or that consummate hypocrisy manifested in the *affected pity* shown to their unhappy victims; when they deliver them over to the secular arm for punishment, after irrevocably sealing their fate!!

One would think, after what has been said, that no people could be sunk into such a state of mental degradation as not to hail, with the most enthusiastic rapture, the happy era which promised deliverance from so cruel and tyrannic a system! Yet, strange as it may appear, we are told that the humane and enlightened measure of the cortes, the *abolition of the inquisition*, was considered by the populace of Spain as *an infringement of their liberties!!!*

Church.—A patent for hypocrisy; the refuge for sloth, ignorance, and superstition; the corner stone of tyranny. *Pigott.*

* The inquisitors have chosen to punish heretics by fire, in preference to any other punishment, in order to elude a certain maxim; because, as they say, *Burning a man does not break his bones, or shed his blood!*

† The inquisitors, who are ecclesiastics, do not pronounce the sentence of death, but *burn* and read an act, in which they say, that the criminal being convicted of such a crime by his own confession, is, with much reluctance, delivered to the secular power to be punished according to his deserts. True indeed it is, that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel!

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 18.

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VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ANTIDOTE.

The "*Antidote*" complains bitterly that they have written "five essays" (and now a sixth) without making a convert of the editor of the *Correspondent*. If the five essays, which I have not seen, resemble the sixth, which I have seen, it required no prophetic spirit to predict such a result from such a mass of cant and sophistry.

It is a melancholy truth that nothing but priestcraft has prevented, or ever will prevent, man from arriving at the knowledge of the laws of Nature; and awful indeed must be the lot of every man who cannot find his God without the aid of a mercenary priest. For all priests are mercenary; and, if you drop a hundred dollars additional salary into a bag, and shake it before a priest, you may lead him from one village or town to another, in the same manner as the Swiss "loch" their favorite cows from one district to another.

"But," says the *Antidote*, "what Christian priest or clergyman ever inculcated cruelty and savage barbarity of any kind?" We answer, every "Christian priest or clergyman" from the year when Annanias and Sapphira were slain, down to the introduction of philosophy and the art of printing, about 300 years ago! So that for about 1500 years the Christian priests did nothing but bury the people, as well as themselves, in the vilest ignorance, and "inculcate cruelty and savage barbarity of" every "kind," not only against their national enemies, as the "Arabs" do, but against millions of their own Christian brethren! Persecution has never failed to exist in every priesthood in Christendom. The protestants abandoned their mother church on account of persecution unto death of millions by that church; but no sooner did the protestants become sufficiently *powerful* to wreak their vengeance on helpless victims, than their clergy imitated the burnings and tortures of the mother church, and finally drove hundreds and thousands of their victims to America for shelter and liberty of conscience.

But it would seem as if all the devils described in the New Testament had turned priests; for no sooner had these friends of "liberty of conscience" acquired sufficient power than they also commenced a similar persecution against every man, woman, and child who entertained any doubts of their infallibility on all matters of conscience, and either banished them or punished them with death. How long is it since your priests abandoned witchcraft as a fable? and how many innocent mortals were executed by them under the silly accusation of witchcraft? Where was the evidence of your benevolent God and benevolent religion to be

found at that time? The existence of witchcraft is fully proved by your Bible in the case of the witch of Endor; and yet, where is the priest who dares now say publicly that witches ever existed? The record of this impossibility for a fact is of itself sufficient to blast the credit of every other word of your Bible. Remember! the more you stir in the quagmires thereof the deeper you will sink into them! Such was the boasted influence of Christianity on the morals of the various nations who professed it, that nothing but wars and murders for conscience sake could satisfy their insatiable appetite for blood! And yet the clergy of the *Antidote* have the impudence to inquire whether any "Christian priest or clergyman ever inculcated cruelty or savage barbarity of any kind?" Is then the blow of the "Arab" greater "cruelty" than the burning faggots and hangings of the Christian priests?

Again: "And will even Mr. Shultz,* with all his deep rooted prejudices against Christianity, believe for a moment that if the Arabs were enlightened by the gospel, and their hearts impressed with its benevolent precepts, they would treat their captives as they now do?" There is not a single benevolent precept in your Bible but what was taught by Brahma more than 3000 years before Christ was born! And no doubt the Arabs must have heard of them from India hundreds of years before Christ did. If the Jews had the first offer of your "gospel," and kicked it into the fire, it is very probable that the Arabs had the second offer or perusal of that gospel, and decided on its merits nearly 2000 years before the clergy of the *Antidote* had any opportunity of seeing the same work.

Virtue and vice had been discussed and defined thousands of years before Moses; nay, all the theology as well as morality found in your Bible were first taught by Brahma for ages before. It is not true, as the *Antidote* asserts, that "Christianity has expelled the most revolting principles and practices of the feudal system," for they remain still, a monument of disgrace to a great part of Europe: nor has it "extended commerce, civilization, and freedom," nor "softened the horrors of war," nor "the rigors of feudal codes," nor "advanced in all quarters the cause of literature and science." Nor has it "raised us to the pinnacle of national prosperity and glory;" for it is to philosophy and printing alone that we can truly ascribe the enjoyment of all these blessings; and, until they made their appearance, about 300 years ago, Christianity remained, what it always has been, a wretched system, producing nothing but wars, misery, and woe to all the Christian world.

There are many Christian nations and states who, notwithstanding they are Christians now, and ever have been since their conversion, yet still remain in nearly as wretched a state as ever, because their masters and rulers have always opposed the introduction of philosophy and science among them. Need we refer you to the myriads of Russia, of Austria, and catholic Germany; to the hosts of Italy, Naples, and Portugal, or to those of Spain in Europe, as well as those in her late dominions in South America? There you find the full "influence of Christianity," unaided by the powerful lights of philosophy; and what a deplorable picture of their moral state, as well as of their happiness, do they present!

* All "Mr. Shultz's deep rooted prejudices" were in favor of and not against Christianity, until he divested himself of all prejudices whatever.

If your Christ was a God, was he not omnipotent as well as omniscient? and if so, why did he not discover the best mode of circulating and establishing his doctrines throughout the world, by means of the art of printing?

C. SCHULTZ.

WHAT IS BLASPHEMY?

Mr. Editor—To speak *blasphemously*, as far as I am able to understand that expression, can only signify, to speak dishonorably of God: to speak in derogation of his divine nature and attributes. Now, since both reason and scripture teach us, that the only true God is *immutable, incorporeal, and omnipresent*, should any doctrine assert, that the divine nature hath undergone a change, and assumed a *corporeal* form, which must be local, I think there can be no doubt but such doctrine would be highly injurious to the Deity, and derogatory from his most essential attributes as well as most pernicious in its consequences. For this reason, when the Israelites at Mount Horeb, meaning to worship the true God, erected the golden calf, as a fit emblem of the object of their religious adoration, it will not, I presume, be denied, that they were guilty of *the most blasphemous idolatry*; and, when exulting in the restoration of that mode of religious worship, in behalf of which they had acquired an habitual prejudice in the land of Egypt, they loudly proclaimed that four footed image to be a just representation of the Almighty Being whose interposition had so lately delivered them from their Egyptian bondage; whether we judge their conduct by the dictates of reason, or by the law of Moses, they were, most certainly, guilty of *speaking blasphemously against God*. Let us suppose, then, for a moment, that the means of forming the molten image had failed them, but that they had asserted, that the God *who brought them up out of the land of Egypt* had previously taken the *bovine nature* upon him in the belly of a cow, been made an ox, and had appeared in Egypt, and, though then in heaven, still continued incarnate in the body of that animal; and that, even without the use of any visible symbol, they had instituted a form of divine worship, adapted to the name and properties of the fabulous god Apis. Surely, in this case, both the worship and the language of the Israelites would have been, at least, equally *blasphemous*, as in the other.

There may be some, perhaps, who will readily allow the charge of *blasphemy* in so monstrous and disgusting an instance as is here supposed, but who do not think it equally, nor even in any degree, blasphemous against Almighty God to teach, that, in another place and period, he became incarnate in the body of an animal of a more excellent nature and superior rank. But, certainly, whatever difference there may be in the nature of finite beings, when compared with each other, there is absolutely none at all, when we consider them with respect to the infinite and eternal creator of the universe; and, consequently, both the *blasphemy* of the expression, and the impossibility of the fact, must be exactly the same, whether we affirm the Almighty to be incarnate, by having been made one of the *lowest* or one of the *highest* order of those creatures, which his own power and goodness hath called into existence.

Lest, however, I should appear to speak rashly, and to revile long established opinions without sufficient grounds, I beg you to consider, that

the Deity is, in his very nature, omnipresent; that his becoming incarnate, in a particular body, evidently implies his being more immediately present with that body than with any other: whereas, the very meaning of omnipresence is, that he is equally present, equally close connected, as far as such a being can properly be said to be connected, with all the bodies in the universe. You will be pleased to recollect, likewise, that God is *immutable*, another attribute absolutely inconsistent with his *incarnation*. To evince this, let us only attend to the commonly received opinions of man, as a being compounded of two natures, the one spiritual, the other carnal. Allowing this idea to be just, and that, at the dissolution of this composition by death, man exists simply in a spiritual state, it is certain that the alteration made by death in the mode of his existence is the greatest change such a compound being can undergo. It is evident, therefore, that were a purely spiritual being, such as the soul of man is usually presumed to be, when separated from the body, to become compounded with a carnal nature like our own, he would suffer a change exactly equivalent to that which man is said to suffer at his death. And, since the difference between the nature of God and that of the most perfect created being is infinitely great, to assert that he who hath existed from eternity in a spiritual, incorporeal, uncompound state, hath at length adopted another mode of existence, and is become compounded with a material, animal body, is to assert, that the only unchangeable being in the universe hath undergone a change infinitely greater than any of his own mutable creatures can undergo. B.

RIGHTS OF WOMEN.

Mr. Editor—One method of advancing the Christian religion, and of retarding the progress of truth, has been the subject of very little remark, although of great importance in its consequences: it is the unjust and impudent ascendancy which the priests and professors of religion maintain over the female mind, and the unprincipled methods by which they endeavor to perpetuate that ascendancy. Does a man break through the fetters of superstition imposed on him by a mistaken system of education, it is ten to one that he places himself in opposition to the opinion of one or more of the other sex, in the shape of a mother, wife, or aunt, who, instigated by *pious* pastors or their *pious* professing followers, declare interminable war against him, unless he renounces opinions produced by reflection, examination, and evidence—in other words, becomes a hypocrite, and professes what he cannot believe, or conceals what he does believe, although he conceives the inculcation of his belief would greatly benefit his fellow beings. The man placed in this situation has only the painful alternatives of sinning unpardonably against his conscience, or of severing bonds of affection which perhaps form his principal prospects of happiness and enjoyment.

The influence of the softer sex over the other is well known; and, in order to convert this influence to their own use, it has ever been the object of the priesthood to inculcate the doctrine that the female mind is not susceptible of that degree of refinement and cultivation which is accessible to the mind of man, and to withhold from them, on this pretence, the

same means and opportunities of instruction which are generally offered to the latter sex. This doctrine has been preached and acted upon for ages; and, until it is eradicated, and woman restored to her proper rank in society, the temple of truth must rest on an insecure foundation. While such illiberal and partial distinctions are made in the education of the two sexes, it is not to be wondered at that females are the most liable to receive and adopt the pernicious doctrines and precepts of a scheming priesthood, and to become, in reality, their tools. We, however, have reason to rejoice that this strong prop of priestly influence is beginning to be undermined; that a few intrepid heroines have set the example (in spite of excommunication and anathemæ) of throwing off the burthen of superstition which their sex has too long labored under, and that the example is approved and imitated. We allude to those ladies who have boldly ventured to attend the meetings of the New York Free Press Association; a step which will no doubt subject them to the abuse and curses of all whose trade is *religion*, and their fanatical followers.

But, in this city at least, superstition and priestcraft have received their death blow: Christianity is beginning to be viewed in its proper light; and many already perceive, that if half the money which is expended to propagate its pernicious tenets was appropriated to the exposure of their baneful tendency, less vice and misery would exist, and morality, fostered and cherished by the *Religion of Nature*, would proportionably increase.

PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

Mr. Editor—During the early progress of Christianity, in the Roman empire, a principal benefit arising from the study of the Grecian philosophy was its tendency among the enlightened classes to discredit the popular divinities, the multiplicity of which had well nigh tired the credulity of the less informed. In Cicero's time, a kind of vague deism, or the pure mechanism of Epicurus, was the common doctrine of the learned; yet, then, certain philosophers had busied themselves in forming systems on the idea of interposing genii, with rites and religious discipline to render them worthy of approaching these superior essences; and it was in the dialogues of Plato they sought the principles of this doctrine. The oppressed and unfortunate of the conquered nations, of weak but sanguine imaginations, attached themselves to the new religion, because the interests of the ruling priests dictated to them an equality in their slavery, and a patient endurance of exactions, toils, and privations, with a renunciation of wealth, honors, and pleasures, to be compensated in a future life of interminable felicity. Some of these, however, felt the necessity of relieving, by metaphysical subtleties, their gross mythology; and to this end they also had recourse to the dialogues of Plato, though they afterward acquired a preference for the doctrines of Aristotle.

Many Egyptian, Jewish, and oriental sects, at once, attacked the old religion of the empire; but, with equal bitterness contending among themselves, they were gradually lost in the religion of Jesus; and from their wreck was collected and fabricated a history, a ritual, and creed, to which most of these fanatics united themselves. Christians then be-

came a powerful party, which mingled in the quarrels of the Cæsars, placed Constantine on the throne, and subsequently seated itself there also, beside his weak succession. "It had then to avenge itself of the outrages of philosophy: it feared the spirit of investigation and doubt, and that confidence of man in his own reason and energies, the pest alike of all religious creeds. Thus prepared, its devotees blindly swallowed its sacred dogmas, fictions, and self contradictions; and, armed with the bloody zeal of intolerance, its triumph was a main cause of the extinction of both reason and science.

Hudson, Nov. 10, 1827.

CONDORCET.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1827.

TO OUR PATRONS.

As the second volume, which will complete the first year of the *Correspondent*, is drawing to a close, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) in *advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months in *advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if *city* subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year *at our office*, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE NINTH.

The story in the 7th chapter of Genesis, about the whole earth having been once overflowed with water, is one of the most ridiculous legends that ever was palmed on the credulity of man. Even the leading personage in the tale is the child of fable and of fiction; and, notwithstanding the many elaborate volumes that have been written to give him personal identity, I have not been able to discover any thing that tends to render this obscure subject less obscure, or to reconcile it with reason and probability.

The name *Noah*, which the writer of Genesis tells us was that of the individual whom God saved from destruction, when he drowned the world, signifies, in our language, a *boat*. It is a word which was used by the Phenicians as well as by the Hebrews; and, although both of these nations attached several meanings to it, all of them were applicable to a boat; as rest, repose, to quaver, and to totter. *No* is also synonymous with *habitation*; as in the ancient name of Thebes, which was Ammon-*no*, the habitation of Ammon. In Lower Egypt, during the three months of the year when the country was under water, the people lived in boats, and did no work. It was then the time of rest, and the *no*, or *boat*, was a symbol of repose. In Chaldea and Hindostan, also, the inhabitants of the plains had recourse to the aid of *flotillas*, during the season of rain. Here, as well as in Egypt, lived the *Noachids*, or *children of the boat*; the fragments of whose history the Jews evidently blended with their own. Hence would very naturally arise the idea that these were the children of *Noach*, as if *Noach* had been a man or a woman. People who live in poverty are called the children of *distress*, but we never suppose that distress is either a man or a woman.

One writer asserts that *Menu* was *Noah*. Now there never was such a person as *Menu*. It was a symbol of laws and regulations, and is the *Manoah* of the Jews, which means to regulate, or to cast up; that is, to reckon. It is varied in pronunciation, and is sometimes called *Menus*, *Manas*, and *Menah*; from which is derived the English *Moon*, the regulator of time. The same writer says that *Nau*, a Greek word which signifies a ship, was *Noah*; but whether *Noah* be a boat or a ship, is alike fatal to his existence as a man. In another place, he informs his readers that *Hippomanes* is *Noah*. This still destroys the existence of *Noah* as an identical man; though it will establish the mythological origin of the being so called; for *Hippomanes*, according to Ovid, was *admiral of the navy of the island of Atalanta*, and traced his pedigree but four removes from *Neptune, king of the waters*. We have already seen how the word *Moses*, or *Mises*, which signifies *saved from the waters*, came to be considered a real personage. Here we have a similar mistake, which is traced to ancient memorials, by which it is established that the inhabitants of the level countries were under the necessity of living in boats a considerable part of the year, to escape the annual inundations.

The account which Berosus gives of a deluge by which a vast multitude of people were destroyed, and which, according to Josephus, this Chaldean historian ascertained by the most ancient writings, so closely resembles that given in Genesis, that it is next to impossible to doubt the writer of the latter had the former before him when he compiled his history. Berosus not only speaks of the great influx of waters, and of the destruction of men, in nearly the same words, but he mentions the ark, in which *Nechus*, as he calls him, was saved. Abydenus, another very ancient writer, as mentioned by Eusebius, gives the following account of what the Egyptians believed respecting the deluge: "*Sisithrus* (i. e. Noah) having been informed by *Saturn* that there would be a great flood of waters on the 15th day of the month *Deains*, commanded him to hide all writings in Heliopolis of the Sybarians. When he had performed this, *Sisithrus* immediately sailed to Armenia, where what God had predicted to him came to pass. The third day after the waters ceased, he sent forth birds that he might try whether they could find any land not covered with water. But they finding nothing but sea, returned back to *Sisithrus*. In like manner, after some days, he sent out others, with similar success. But when the birds were sent out the third time, they returned with their feet covered with mud. Then the gods caught up *Sisithrus* among men; but the ship remained in Armenia, and the wood of it afforded the inhabitants amulets to chase away many diseases." Berosus also says, that in his time it was reported there was some part of this vessel remaining at the mountain of the Gordyæans, and that many scraped off the bitumen for medicinal purposes.

According to Ovid, the earth was once inundated by water, which destroyed all mankind except *Ducalion* and *Pyrra*. Nonnus affirms, that the earth was *three times* entirely destroyed by water, and that the flood mounted to heaven, and added by its foam to the whiteness of the Milky Way. Thus we perceive, without any stretch of fancy or conjecture, that the ancients always connected the remarkable occurrences in Nature with the constellations, or other appearances in the heavens. In the Bible, we have the opening of the windows of heaven to let the water descend which was to drown the earth, and their shutting again after its destruction was completed. Here, we have the flood mounting to heaven, and adding by its foam to the whiteness of the Milky Way. Both accounts are decidedly emblematical—a mode of instruction peculiar to all the orientals, and which was readily followed by the Jews when they began to study the history of these ancient nations; whose chronologies, however, they mutilated, and changed the character of their writings, in order to give countenance to their unfounded and arrogant pretensions, that they were the stock whence all the nations of the earth sprung.

We learn from the accounts of the Jesuits who travelled in India, about the beginning of the last century, that the people of that country also believed in a deluge. They say that "the god *Routren*, the great destroyer, resolved one day to drown all mankind, pretending that he had just cause to be displeased with them. His design could not be so secret but that *Vichnou*, the preserver, was sensible of it. He discovered the very day on which the deluge was to happen. His power did not extend so far as to stop the execution of *Routren*'s design; but his qualifi-

cation of god, the preserver of all things, empowered him to prevent, if possible, the most pernicious effects; and thus he went about it: he appeared one day to Sattiaivarti, his great confidant, and warned him that he had nothing to fear for himself, and that, in despite of Routren, he would find means to save him, and to manage it so as the world should be peopled again. His design was to produce a wonderful barque at the time when Routren least thought of it, and to shut up in it a good stock of at least eight hundred and forty millions of souls and seeds of beings. It was also requisite that Sattiaivarti, at the time of the deluge, should be on a very high mountain, which he must take special care to make known to him. Some time after, as had been foretold, Sattiaivarti perceived an infinite number of clouds gathering. He observed without any alarm the storm threatening over the heads of guilty mortals. The most dreadful rain that ever had been seen fell from heaven; the rivers swelled, and spread themselves with the utmost rapidity over the face of the earth; the sea broke beyond its bounds, and, mixing with the overflowing rivers, in a short time covered the highest mountains. Trees, beasts, men, cities, and kingdoms were all drowned. All animated beings perished.

"In the mean time, Sattiaivarti, with some of his penitents, had withdrawn himself to his mountain. There he expected the relief promised him by the god; nor was he without some moments of dread. The water, which continually grew more powerful, and insensibly drew near his retreat, every now and then caused him considerable alarm; but at the very moment he gave himself up for lost, he saw the barque appear which was to save him. He entered it immediately with his devout followers. The eight hundred and forty millions of souls and seeds of beings were shut up there before him. The difficulty consisted in steering the barque, and keeping it up against the waves, which were then furiously agitated. The god Vichnou took care to provide for this. He immediately converted himself into a fish, and used his tail as a rudder to steer the vessel. The god, who was at the same time fish and pilot, managed so dexterously, that Sattiaivarti waited at his ease for the water to run off from the earth."

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—The members of this Association are reminded, that the regular monthly meeting takes place, in the Temple of Arts, William street, on Sunday the 1st of December next, at 10 o'clock forenoon. As business of importance will come before the meeting, a full attendance is requested.

The Sunday *morning* lecture is now delivered in the Central Academy, rear of No. -18 Hammersly street, (being a continuation of Houston street,) at half past 10 o'clock.

. Arrangements are now making to introduce a regular course of *scientific* lectures (in connection with the theological lectures) at the meetings of the Association. Due notice will be given when the first of these lectures will be delivered.

Almanac.—The Editor of the *Correspondent* is now preparing for the press an *Almanac* modelled on rational principles, and entirely divested

of those puerilities and absurdities which characterize every work of that description now in circulation. It will contain all useful and necessary calculations, and such other matters as may have a tendency to enlarge, not to paralyze, the human mind. The retail price will be 6 1-4 cents; but to those who take 25 copies for distribution, a discount of 25 per cent. will be given. Such as are disposed to encourage this undertaking are requested to give notice as soon as possible of the number of copies they may require, as it is intended to put this work to press early in December. Any communication calculated to render this Almanac useful or interesting, may be left at No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Death of a Liberal.—Lord Seldon was a liberal—he was dying—his physicians doubted if he could live throughout the ensuing week; and his lady, who had been brought up in the strictest tenets of the Christian religion, feared he would die an unbeliever. Was there any hope she could now effect that, which for the space of eighteen years, had been the aim of her life? Daily had she urged the topic, and was always answered by her husband with exquisite good humor. She felt the delusive hope, that the morrow would prove more propitious than today. Once, and once only, when she urged him beyond his strength, having exhausted all her eloquence in favor of Christianity, and finding him still regardless, she could no longer restrain her anger, but with clasped hands and raised eyes, she exclaimed aloud, “behold, oh, Lord, the worm that dare deny thy existence and authority!”—then, bending her eyes on her husband with a look of desperation, she continued,—“and I had fixed my heart on a confirmed atheist—a man on whom the breath of heaven should not wander.” Lord Seldon was now evidently displeased. “Emily,” said he, “when I see that religion whose merits you are always asserting cannot even teach you to command your temper, you will not blame my humility, when I fear its salutary effects might be equally lost upon myself.” He then hastily left the room, and his countess internally vowed never more to name religion in his presence. Lady Seldon, however, descanted daily, nay hourly, in glowing colors, on the horrors of atheism, and the certain fate that awaited it; perhaps an undefined hope that she might reach the father’s heart through the medium of his children mingled itself with her exertions; but surely she was mistaken in the means she took to obtain this end.

A great change had lately taken place in lord Seldon; an hereditary malady was fast destroying the seeds of life—his wife now thought it her duty to renew every endeavor for his conversion; for once she appealed eloquently, for she appealed to the heart—she descanted long on the immeasurable power of the almighty—she told him that even yet it was not too late. “Repent—believe—and have you faith,” said she, her heart upon her lips, as she turned to the dying sufferer. “If there be a God said he, “good works will be more acceptable in his eyes than blind faith, pronounced on the threshold of existence; and those benefits,

my station, my own wishes, have enabled me to confer upon others, will be my propitiation with the eternal." "If," murmured his wife—but he had sunk from excessive debility on his pillow, and was totally unequal to further conversation. Lady Seldon left his apartment to indulge her sorrow freely. After this unsatisfactory attempt she sunk into agitated slumber, from which she awoke unrefreshed, but with renewed composure; she then descended to the drawing room, where her children were weeping for their father. "Dry your tears Laura—George, I am ashamed of this weakness. When you ought both of you, to rouse all your energies to save your father's soul from eternal punishment, you are mourning over his bodily ailments. Come with me, and save him or take warning by beholding the death bed of an atheist." George put his hands to his forehead; his body was convulsed; Laura threw her arms around him. "Dear brother," whispered she, "if he should die unbelieving, our prayers and his virtues will secure him an asylum in heaven."

Lady Seldon led the way to his apartment—they stepped so softly that the dying man did not hear them. A sad change had taken place in his appearance within the last few hours—his dissolution was rapidly approaching—one damp cold hand supported his head above the pillow, the other hung listlessly by the side of his couch. It was a warm autumnal evening—the sun was sinking in unclouded glory, amid burnished clouds, below the horizon—the soft south breeze, that played gently through the open window, waved the clustering curls of his dark brown hair, darker from being contrasted with the livid paleness of his cheek; he had not observed the entrance of his family, and thinking aloud—"Spirit of Nature," said he, "how divine are thy works, how delightful their effects bear me gently into futurity—I have not sought to develope thy mystery—I have only worshipped thee in the bright sun—in the soft moon—in the green fields—in human nature—in my friends—in my wife—my children! Art thou satisfied with such worship—the worship of the heart?" "Oh—no—no—he is not—he cannot be: what do you mean by the spirit of nature?" interrupted his wife. "That which produced this world and myriads of others; that which produced thee, my sweet Emily, and my beloved children." "My dear father" cried Laura, her countenance brightening with renewed hope, "we shall meet again in heaven;" he pressed her to his bosom, and with a voice rendered almost inarticulate by emotion, said, "I hope so, if there be a heaven, I am sure so—and now my sweet children, to you I will confess what human pride would still urge me to conceal, that I would give up all, even this last hour of your endearments, to purchase a thorough conviction that we should meet again—I go without fear, but I go cheerlessly; I would purchase the hope that brightens your brow, my Laura," continued he, as he convulsively pressed her fingers. "I am without fear," repeated he, "but without hope," and relaxing the grasp by which he held his daughter's hand, he sank upon his pillow.

The sun had scarcely sunk below the horizon—the attendant clouds, still in gorgeous splendor, lingered to tint with varied beauty the western heaven; the same delicious air still played around his forehead—he had spoken but an instant before, and he will never speak again; he will

wake no more to rejoicing—he will no more watch for and hail the returning spring, the eternal reproduction of Nature—no—that form of manly beauty will shortly be food for worms—the fire of that eye is fled, that often would persuade before his tongue gave birth to eloquence—how soon will all recollection of him be banished from the earth—he who apparently was the centre of a little world, dealing sunshine or discontent, as he directed or denied his approving glance. It is singular to consider that a unit taken from the sum of human beings makes no alteration in the general law; and that the broken hearts of his nearest and dearest connections go for nothing in the scale of general happiness.

Abuse of "Holy Religion."—The archbishop of Cashel, in Ireland, declared in a late debate, that *poper*y was a religion fit only for *fools or knaves*! This was rather *illiberal* of the Irish pontiff, and *ungrateful* too, considering the *great additions and improvements* Christianity has received, under the auspices of the popes. We should expect better policy from the protestant priesthood, than to cry down any *branch* of holy religion, at a time the liberals are laying the *axe* to the *root*. Popery, to be sure, may adopt some *few* silly things, and superstitious notions, which the archbishop despises and rejects; but he ought to consider, that he and his brother Pius, are agreed in *fundamentals*, and that one is as *good a polytheist* as the other. The pope believes in *three gods* as well as he; and if the one be an *idolator*, so is the other.

The Frenchman, who called Christianity the *religion of asses*, was still more illiberal than the archbishop, if he meant to say, that all those, who believe Athanasius's Creed, are *asses*. For we know that some of the ablest men living are of this creed, and *live well by it too*. In justice, however, to the French author, we must suppose that he alluded to the *many asses* that have *figured* in the Old and New Testament. In the former, we have a *loud and braying miracle*, out of the mouth of *Balaam's ass*, who is justly *ranked* among the *Jewish prophets*; and had we no other proof of divine revelation than this, it would be *sufficient* to fix our belief, and make us say *amen* to every thing told us by the ministers of the altar.

In the new dispensation, we find an ass, or the *colt of an ass*, make a distinguished figure and enter triumphantly, mounted by God, into Jerusalem. It is no wonder, then, that this *humble animal* should receive *honors next to divine* in the Christian church, and be spoken of *reverently* by *pious persons*. However decided our antipathy may be to superstition, we are not at all pleased to hear *Jewish or Christian asses* *laughed at or ridiculed*; for such *impious scoffing* tends greatly to *lessen* the people's respect, for their *priests* and their *holy religion*.

Newspapers.—A late Eastern paper gives the number of subscribers to the *Christian Advocate*, a Journal printed in New York for the methodist church, at 15,000. There is another paper in that city belonging to the presbyterians, having, it is said, about the same number. There is also one at Boston; and many smaller ones scattered throughout the Union. Here is a patronage not much surpassed, if equalled, by that

given to any publications on the globe; and for what purpose? To spread useful science? To teach man the arts? his political duties? love and fellowship to his brother?—No!—the very reverse of all this is, the object of these millions of sheets; it is to make man a bigot; a fanatic; a slave to priests; a persecutor, or a hypocrite—to close his eyes upon the real beauties and sublime truths of Nature, and to make him contemplate error and falsehood in their stead. What a shameful perversion of the boasted liberty of the press! Have editors *who advocate the great principles of human liberty* reflected on the subject? A religious newspaper is, or is not, opposed to them. If not, they are the best channels of political and useful information, and ought to supersede and do away with all other newspapers. If opposed to a faithful discussion of our rights, then they are dangerous and useless; and as far as a unanimous appeal by all *honest republican editors* to reason and good sense can accomplish the object, they ought to be exposed. A moment's observation will convince the unprejudiced, that if our money and time is to be devoted to the follies, quarrels, falsehoods, and fanaticism of religious sects, there is at once an end of nations and free government. These newspapers have no other object or tendency.—*Western Tiller.*

Propagating the Gospel.—The propagation of the gospel among the Livonians was attended with horrible scenes of cruelty and bloodshed. The first missionary who attempted the conversion of that savage people was Mainhard, a regular canon of St. Augustin, in the monastery of Segeberg, who, towards the conclusion of this century (the twelfth) travelled to Livonia with a company of merchants of Bremen, and improved this opportunity of spreading the light of the gospel in that barbarous region of superstition and darkness. The instructions and exhortations of this zealous apostle were little attended to, and produced little or no effect upon that uncivilized nation; whereupon he addressed himself to the Roman pontiff, Urban III., who consecrated him bishop of the Livonians, and, at the same time, declared a *holy war* against that obstinate people. This war, which was at first carried on against the inhabitants of the province of Esthonia, was continued with still greater vigor, and rendered more general, by Berthold, abbot of Lucea, who left his monastery to share the labors and *laurels* of Mainhard, whom he accordingly succeeded in the see of Livonia. The new bishop marched into that province at the head of a *powerful army* which he had raised in Saxony, *preached the gospel sword in hand, and proved its truth by blows, instead of arguments.* Albert, canon of Bremen, became the third bishop of Livonia, and followed with a barbarous enthusiasm the same *military* methods of conversion that had been practised by his predecessor. He entered Livonia, A. D. 1198, with a fresh body of troops drawn out of Saxony, and encamping at Riga, instituted there, by the direction of pope Innocent III., *the military orders of the knights' sword bearers*, who were commissioned to dragoon the Livonians into the profession of Christianity, and oblige them by force of arms to receive the *benefits* of baptism.

New legions were sent from Germany to second the efforts, and add efficacy to the mission, of these booted apostles; and they, in concert

with knights' sword bearers, so cruelly oppressed, slaughtered, and tormented this wretched people, that, exhausted at length, and unable longer to stand firm against the arm of persecution, strengthened still by new accessions of power, they abandoned the statues of their pagan deities, and substituted in their places the images of the saints. But while they received the blessings of the gospel they were deprived of all earthly comforts: for their lands and possessions were taken from them, with the most odious circumstances of cruelty and violence, and the knights and bishops divided the spoil.—*Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. III. pages 5 and 6.

Faith.—Credulity, superstition. An article loudly extolled and vehemently insisted on, in all ages, by priests and kings. Success has crowned their exertions. Mankind, on every occasion, have opened a gullet wide enough to swallow the absurdest paradoxes, the most glaring impossibilities. Only say, that "an army of soldiers was seen last night to pass over the moon," and you will immediately perceive a vast legion of implicit believers making their comments and remarks on the phenomenon, explaining it on the authority of scriptural prophecies. Nothing too preposterous for popular credulity, which has been always fed and cherished by the great leaders in church and state; knowing this, on that basis only their empire depends. Thus have nations by dint of error and superstition, for a vast succession of ages, yielded themselves up to the dominion of royal or priestly authority, which, in most instances, have formed a coalition for the purpose, whereby the community have been plunged into a fathomless abyss of servitude and ignorance, from which patriotism and philosophy have hitherto labored in vain to rescue them. The faith inspired by priestcraft and statecraft, is the prime cause of that misery and tyranny, which, to this hour, continue to rage through the universe. The scourges of the world are held out by priests, as the viceregents of heaven, and the opinions and consciences of men, till very lately, have been almost entirely directed by priests: but as their empire was terribly convulsed by the revolution in France, which served so essentially to enlighten the human understanding, may it soon be totally destroyed, and may wisdom, peace, and philanthropy erect a lasting throne, on the wreck of faith, error, and superstition!—*Pigott*.

Casting out Devils.—A person of quality came to my chamber in the Temple, and told me he had two devils in his head, (I wondered what he meant,) and just at that time, one of them told him to kill me. With that I began to be afraid, and thought he was mad. He said he knew I could cure him, and, therefore entreated me to give him something, for he was resolved he would go to nobody else. I, perceiving what an opinion he had of me, and that it was only melancholy that troubled him, took him in hand, warranted him, if he would follow my directions, to cure him in a short time. I desired him to let me be alone about an hour, and then to come again, which he was very willing to do. In the mean time, I got a card, and wrapped it up handsomely in a piece of taffeta, and put strings to the taffeta; and when he came, gave it to him, to hang about his neck; withal charged him, that he should not disorder himself, neither with eat-

ing nor drinking, but eat very little of supper, and say his prayers duly when he went to bed; and I made no question but he would be well in three or four days. Within that time I went to dinner to his house, and asked him how he did? He said he was much better, but not perfectly well, for, in truth, he had not dealt clearly with me: he had four devils in his head, and he perceived two of them were gone, with that which I had given him; but the other two troubled him still. "Well," said I, "I am glad two of them are gone; I make no doubt to get away the other two likewise." So I gave him another thing to hang about his neck. Three days after he came to me to my chamber, and professed he was as well as he ever was in his life, and did extremely thank me for the care I had taken of him. I, fearing that he might relapse into the like distemper, said that there was none but myself and one physician more in the whole town that could cure the devils in the head, and that was Dr. Harvey, (whom I had prepared,) and wished him, if ever he found himself ill in my absence, to go to him, for he could cure the disease as well as myself. The gentleman lived many years, and was never troubled after.—*Selden*.

Astrology.—The large majority of the Asiatics are so infatuated in favor of judicial astrology, that, according to their phraseology, no circumstance can happen below which is not written above. In every enterprise they consult their astrologers. When two armies have completed every preparation for battle, no consideration can induce the generals to commence the engagement until the sahet be performed; that is, until the propitious moment for attack be ascertained. In like manner, no commanding officer is nominated, no marriages take place, and no journey is undertaken, without consulting these seers. Their advice is considered absolutely necessary, even on the most trifling occasions; as the proposed purchase of a slave, or the first wearing of new clothes. The astrologer is necessarily made acquainted with every transaction, public and private; with every project, common and extraordinary. It happened that the king's principal astrologer fell into the water and was drowned. This melancholy accident caused a great sensation at court, and proved injurious to the reputation of these professors in divination. The man, who had thus lost his life always performed the sahet for the king and the omrahs; and the people naturally wondered that an astrologer of such extensive experience, and who had for many years predicted happy incidents for others, should have been incapable of foreseeing the sad catastrophe by which he was himself overwhelmed. It was insinuated that, in Frangistan, where the sciences flourish, professors in theology are considered little better than cheats and jugglers; that it is there much doubted whether the science be founded on good and solid principles, and whether it be not used by designing men as a mean of gaining access to the great, of making them feel their dependance, and their absolute need of these pretended soothsayers.

Origin of Evil.—The epicureans say, Either God can take away from the world pain, wickedness, and misery, and he will not; or, he is willing to do so, but he cannot; or, he is neither able nor willing to do so;

or, he is both able and willing. In the *first* case, he is wanting in attributes of goodness and benevolence; and he is, moreover, himself the author of all pain, wickedness, and misery. In the *second* case, he forfeits his attribute of omnipotence; and Satan, or the principle of evil, is independent of and superior to him. In the *third* case, he cannot be considered as either a benevolent or a good God. In the *fourth* case, we have a right to put the unanswerable question, Why then do pain, wickedness, and misery exist in the world?

Convent of the Augustines, at Cadix.—A multitude of weeping Magdalenes, bedizzened in the finest apparel, meet the eye at every turn; and their sorrow touched aspect, besmeared with a sufficiency of oil, give them a most sedatory character; and this, I apprehend, is intended; the agony of their souls is presumed to facilitate a copious sweat, and to typify the exudation of mortal sin! It is remarkable, that while they enjoin the votaries of religion in this world to discard the vanities of dress, they heap together upon these exemplars of sanctity, these waxen personifications of good manners, all the gewgaws that female fancy could devise, or the female heart covet. Surely the prayer that is offered up at shrines so decorated, must needs participate in this their most palpable characteristic; and, instead of suggesting to the mind devout sentiments, is more calculated to call up from the innermost recesses of the heart the dormant feelings of worldly vanity.

Sacred.—Exclusively every word which comes out of the mouth of that infallible, though human being, called a priest.—*Pigott.*

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

CHINESE CUSTOMS.

Extract from the Journal of a Voyage to Canton.

"At night there was a great display of fireworks on the river, and several large junks were most brilliantly illuminated with a large number of lamps arranged with such taste and fancy as to produce a very fine effect as they passed down the stream. This we were told was a peace offering to the DEVIL. The following evening a party of us went through the houses of Kinqua, Youqua, and Ponkiqua, security merchants, which were splendidly decorated and illuminated with variegated lamps, artificial flowers, and a variety of other ornaments, in honor of the DEVIL, or QUI, as he is called by the Chinese. Europeans and Americans go by the name of FANQUI, or STRANGE DEVIL, to which they not unfrequently add the term of QUISI, that means rogue, rascal, knave, or any thing bad.

"The 'Sunday shines no Sabbath day' in China. To the Chinese all days are alike, and Europeans, as well as our own countrymen, seem to slide into the same custom with a great deal of facility. They transact business on that day just the same as through the week. The first and the few succeeding days of the new year are the only holidays, as far as I can learn, observed by the Chinese. At this time the poorest peasant makes a point of having a new suit of clothes for himself and his family, while they pay visits to their friends and relations, interchange civilities and compliments, and make and receive presents."

It is, I believe, universally admitted by travellers in China, that its inhabitants are a very mild, inoffensive people, and at least as moral, if not more so, than Christian nations; from whence it may be inferred, that it makes little or no difference which is worshipped, God or the devil. In fact, by the description generally given of them, it would be difficult to decide which should have the preference. As represented by theologians, they both excite fear and horror, unaccompanied with respect; and, as the devil is considered the prime minister, or executor of the will of the Almighty in the punishment of mortals, it appears wise in the Chinese to endeavor to gain his good graces. A catholic Spaniard adopted the same policy: being under apprehensions of death, he sent for his father confessor to take the confession of his sins. The priest represented to him the awful tortures with which the devil would afflict him, provided he did not sincerely repent; to which the sick man replied, "I hope my lord, the devil, will not be so cruel;" and, being reproved by the priest for this manner of expression, he said, "he thought it safest to treat his honor with civility, as he did not know into whose hands he might fall."

With respect to the Chinese, if they practise a more pure morality than Christians, it must be attributed to the precepts of their philosophical lawgiver, Confucius, whose system of ethics is decidedly far superior to any that has ever been promulgated, either by inspiration or otherwise.

A. B.

TO PRIEST "S."

Mr. Editor—If your correspondent S. had ever read Mr. Shultz's "Memoir," or "Biblical Challenge to Bishop Hobart and every Clergy," (priest S. included, of course,) which was duly published in the eastern and western newspapers, he would have known that Mr. Shultz is the advocate of a very simple system of religion, called "theism," which consists in the three following items: the unity of god, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. And this, I will venture to say, is the *private* religion of the greater part of every enlightened nation of Christians, where the influence and persecution of priestcraft have made *hypocrisy* absolutely necessary for their prosperity through life. If there is any resemblance between my writings and "Burgoyne" and the "old lady," as priest S. asserts, then I fancy it will be found owing, altogether, to the ignorance of the priest, as usual.

If your correspondent S. had only read the caption of Mr. Shultz's "Triumph of Truth," S. would have discovered at once that Mr. Shultz's "facts" were not all actual facts, but mostly "*historical facts*," &c.; which, of course, include all the "*historical*" fables recorded in the various Bibles, or "words of God," as well as elsewhere.

As your correspondent S. has entirely misquoted Mr. Shultz's fact 171, Mr. S. will not lose time in replying to it.

If your correspondent S. will refer to Mr. Shultz's fact 150, or the Shaster, or extracts from it, S. will find that Brahma taught "the doctrines of the immortality of the soul and a future state of rewards and punishments" about 3,200 years before Christ, or "the comrades or followers of Christ," were born!

If Mr. Shultz has proved that the cosmogony of Moses, like every other, was nothing more than the "guess" work of an ignorant author, then I think that Mr. S. has an equal right to make some "guess" work; leaving it to posterity to decide who makes the most *rational* "guesses."

Now, as the world agree that "atheism" is no religion; and all the Jews and Christians admit that Adam and Eve were the first pair of mortals, and yet neither pagans, Jews, nor Christians; it follows, of course, that they must have been either *theists* or *deists*. And, if Moses is the best authority, then were they deists; and so with all the other patriarchs, including Moses and the Jews, until about 400 years after Moses; for you cannot *prove* that Moses, or any one of them, believed in "the immortality of the soul or a future state of rewards and punishments!"

If we admit, as is generally the case, that we are all the offspring of *one pair* of mortals, no matter by what names they are designated in the various "words of God" of the various nations, it will also follow, as a matter of course, that, if they had any knowledge of religion at all, it must of necessity have been either theism or deism. And, if God ever designed to instruct man at all in his religious duties, it would only have been on that great occasion when, after being created in manhood, without that experience which all their posterity would gradually acquire, he may have instructed them in the unity of God, "the immortality of the

soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments;" and thus produced that pure system of theism which prevailed so long in China, and no doubt among the ancient Hindoos, from whom the Chinese are descended.

But, if the first pair were created in infancy, or left entirely to their own reason and experience, without any instructions whatever from their creator, then they would naturally have become good deists; for man is by nature *good*, and do not become wicked until repeated temptations are thrown in their way.

If, therefore, the first pair were created in manhood, as is generally believed, then the whole creation was a necessary miracle: so it became necessary that the first pair should receive a due share of knowledge from their creator, since they were deprived of that great school, education and experience, which all their posterity have enjoyed.

If God ever made any communication to our first parents, it is now impossible to prove what; but of this we may rest assured, that if our souls are *immortal*, then he, no doubt, instructed our first parents in some such brief items of theology as now compose Mr. Shultz's system of theism. Doctrines so universally spread, though corrupted, can only be traced to the *Highest First Cause!*

C. SCHULTZ.

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT.

Mr. Editor—I was much gratified, a few days ago, to observe an article in the *New York Enquirer*, from the pen of the editor, in which, greatly to the credit of his feelings as a man, he warmly urges his fellow citizens to extend their benevolence, at this trying season, to those children of misfortune now confined in our debtors' prison.

Imprisonment for debt has increased, of late years, to an awful extent, and is disseminating its baneful and immoral principles through all conditions in society—extinguishing all virtuous, kind, and honorable feelings in the breasts of the unfortunate prisoners—ruining whole families, and creating a heavy charge on the public, without a single benefit arising from this barbarous practice. Do not tradesmen who give credit always put an increased price on the article they sell, equivalent to an insurance for loss? What advantage do they reap from imprisoning their debtors? I contend, none. In fact, do seven out of ten persons arrested ever pay a cent? And does not the creditor prevent his debtor from paying him by the very means he takes of tearing him from his business and family? Is it at all an equitable principle that a tradesman voluntarily giving his customers credit for his own profit, and to extend his own business, should call on the community to support a family, probably of six or eight persons, for his individual benefit? especially after he has deprived them of their principal support.

If the *justice* of these proceedings cannot be admitted, neither can their *policy*. Instead of benefiting himself, the creditor irreparably injures the debtor, his family, and the whole community; for, is it possible to suppose that men thrown in prison, kept from the society of their wives, and in total idleness of body and mind, should not be contaminated by the society they mix with; and, from sober, steady, and industrious ha-

bits, fly to drunkenness, debauchery, and gambling for relief? And when the debtor is liberated, does he not return to his house (if he have one) a careless, ruined being, diseased in mind, and, perhaps, in person—with habits that must inevitably do away with his family's happiness, and make him unmindful and inattentive to their present as well as future comfort. And has not his wife, also, perhaps, been unfortunately drawn astray to find clothing and food for herself and children—thus propagating immorality? Is not the country also injured by having numerous individuals thrown on the public charge, who, if they had not been cut off from society, would, by their industry and exertions, have maintained their families, and, by that means, have greatly increased the trade of the neighborhood in which they were established.

Do not these considerations prove the injustice and impolicy of imprisonment for debt? The system is, indeed, dreadful, and calls loudly on the attention of the legislature. It is a subject that the press (that great engine of public opinion) ought warmly to interest itself in; for what becomes of our boasted freedom, when an individual is liable, without any proof, to be imprisoned for months at the will of an inexorable creditor.

VERITAS.

THE DEVIL'S FIGHT.

Mr. Editor—Those of your readers who have read Milton's *Paradise Lost* must be familiar with the warlike exploits of the devil in *heaven*, when he assailed the throne of the Eternal, and which led to his Satanic majesty's expulsion from the celestial regions; but few of them, I presume, are aware that the "Old Serpent" has been engaged, *on this earth*, in a combat which terminated more to his satisfaction, to say nothing of the glory he acquired by the achievement. The fight to which I allude took place in Goslar Cathedral, during the reign of Henry IV. It is true, that Honemann, who gives an account of the conflict, is silent as to the devil being one of the combatants; but this might arise from his devilship not choosing to render himself visible to any one but the bishop, on whose side he so bravely fought. The following is the story, as given by Roscoe: it may, perhaps, serve to amuse some of your readers:

"The emperor Henry IV. was greatly attached to his place of nativity, as every good prince ought to be—the forementioned imperial city of Goslar in the Hartz. There he was wont to sojourn, and to expend large sums upon its enlargement and embellishment. There, too, he held his royal festivals, and in particular his Christmas revels, which were celebrated with the utmost pomp and pageantry. He never omitted to invite a number of the archbishops and bishops of his territories, in order to reflect still greater splendor upon the scene, while it gave greater authority and unction to its enjoyments.

"In the year 1063 were these princes to be seen here assembled for the purpose of solemnizing the Christmas feast. It was intended to be held in the great cathedral, the same which remains standing at this day. The grandest preparations of all kinds had been going on for many days, and conspicuous seats for the noble guests were raised and decorated for the occasion. At this time, there happened to be mooted a serious quer-

tion of precedence, between the then resident bishop of Hildesheim and the head abbot of Fulda, both spiritual lords invited by the emperor to the feast, and here the spiritual controversy was likely to be renewed. Now, according to immemorial custom, the abbot of Fulda was entitled, in an assembly of prelates, to take his station next to the archbishop of Mentz. The bishop of Hildesheim was of another opinion; for in his diocese there were only three archbishops who could boast a right to take precedence of him. As none of their retinue were willing to waive a title of their master's authority, it consequently ensued that from words they soon came to blows, which, had it not been for the piety of archduke Otto of Bavaria, who belonged to the party of Fulda, and exerted himself to mitigate the abbot's rage, by obtaining for him the upper seat, must have been carried to great extremities.

But the embers of discord only slumbered; for on the ensuing feast of Pentecost the question was renewed. The emperor was again at Goslar; the festival was to be kept there in the most magnificent manner, and both these spiritual adversaries were once more summoned to attend. He of Hildesheim was, at this time, determined to wipe off the disgrace which he had suffered from his late defeat, and at all events, come what would, to take his station above him of Fulda. To this end he engaged the margrave Egbert of Saxony, with staunch men at arms, whom he secretly concealed behind the altar, in order to be ready to enforce his claim in time of need, if his enemy would not yield to spiritual exhortation. As the procession of nobles, bishops, and the whole of the royal train, with the emperor at its head, entered the church, the engagement almost immediately began. The old question proceeded from controversy to quarrel; from words to blows: the signal for the bishop's party to leave their ambush was given, and they joined in the affray, and by dint of fists and sticks compelled the men of Fulda to abandon the church. These last, incensed in the highest degree, ran to obtain assistance from the citizens, and, arming themselves, again rushed forward into the cathedral, where they found the service already begun, and even the choral hymn given out by the canons. But it was no time to sing; for the new part of the congregation fell upon the bishop's party, not with fists and cudgels, but with drawn swords. It was then the confusion became terrible: the altar was covered with human sacrifices, and blood flowed down the marble steps over the rank grave grown grass, into the street, and had very nearly drowned the sexton.

"The bishop of Hildesheim had fought his way into the pulpit, whence he encouraged his party to stand firm, and promised to answer and give absolution for all the slaughter, in spite of the holy place where it happened, as the confessor and shepherd of his flock. Those of Hildesheim, hearing this indulgence, fought like lions; and the poor emperor in vain tried to assert his authority. Command and entreaty were alike despised; his devotion and his power equally set at defiance. None troubled their heads about him: the bishop had granted absolution to the combatants; and he was happy to make his escape with a whole skin into his palace. The bishop's church militants carried the day. They drove the men of Fulda once more out of the church, and shut the doors.

"But who stood by them in the fray? It was loudly asserted, as the tradition goes, that the devil himself inspired the bishop, and was present at the scene. And more, he laid bravely about him, and, when the victory was won, rose upon his wings, and disappearing through an aperture in the church ceiling, called aloud to the citizens of Goslar, high in air, as he laughed with delight,

"*Hunc diem bellicosum feci!*"

"The hole through which he disappeared no mason has till latterly been found able to repair. The lime and stone invariably fall off again, and it thus remained open during many centuries; for it was all to no purpose to attempt to stop it. At length, however, duke Antony Ubrich of Brunswick, desirous to do away with the recollection of so scandalous an occurrence, adopted the expedient of applying a Bible to the aperture in place of a stone, and by such means it has remained entire to the present day."

THANKSGIVING.

Mr. Editor—The manly and philanthropic sentiments contained in the proclamation of governor E. Lincoln, recommending the 29th day of November ult. to be observed as a day of thanksgiving in the state of Maine, appear to me to be worthy of notice, as such sentiments are unusual in documents of this kind. On inquiry, I find that Mr. Lincoln is a unitarian, which accounts for this anomaly. I have always observed, that when the mind becomes even partially freed from the trammels of superstition, particularly from the dogmas of election and reprobation, the pure, unsophisticated principles of Nature resume their proper station. Humanity becomes the polar star, the *primum mobile* of action. This remark is fully evinced in the present instance. The orthodox clergy of the state of Maine, it is said, are much enraged at this proclamation, and in consequence actually refused their usual prayers at a militia parade at which the governor attended. But I have not heard of any untoward accident happening for want of their canting, hypocritical services. The following is an extract from the concluding paragraph of the proclamation.

A. B.

"I recommend to the citizens of this state to worship God by liberality of sentiment and by open handed beneficence—by instructing the ignorant, guiding the erring, and relieving the unfortunate—by aiding the poor and sick, going and doing good as the good Samaritan did," (who by the way was no Christian,) "and teaching and practising the duty of kindness."

Reflections of a Tourist on his return from Europe.—"I always found most corruption in extreme wealth and extreme poverty. I found in all nations religion, muffled up in superstition, abused to the injury of society, and converted by open force or hypocrisy into an instrument of deception, ambition, avarice, voluptuousness, or indolence. I found individuals and nations made worse by religion without morals."

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On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE NINTH.

Continued from page 281.

A Mahometan writer, whose work contains several particulars of the Egyptian history, narrates the following tradition of the Arabians :—
 “When Noah first entered the ark by God’s command, he let out the raven to bring intelligence of the decrease of the waters. The raven never returned, but preyed on the carrions of the dead ; on which Noah pronounced imprecations against her, that she might never be a domestic bird, but live like a vagabond, and feed on carcases. After this he let out the dove. She soon returned with her feet stained by the slime of the earth, which the sun had now heated : and her feet have continued red from that time. Noah then prayed to God to preserve her swiftness, and that she might become a domestic bird, and beloved of men. He likewise prayed, that she might have patience to bear the loss of her young ; and he gave her his benediction. Those who were in the ark with Noah having pressed him to have it cleansed, he gave the elephant a slap under the ear ; on which this animal sneezed out a hog, which immediately set about the work of cleansing. The rats growing very numerous and troublesome, Noah gave the lion a blow under the ear, when the monarch of the forest sneezed out a cat to destroy these vermin.”

The *Ark*, said to have been framed as directed by divine wisdom, for the preservation of Noah, was no other than the *sacred ship* in the Chaldaic and Egyptian spheres ; and which the Greeks afterwards called *Argo*, the ship of *Osiris*. The Argonautic expedition has been always esteemed authentic, and admitted as a chronological æra. The golden fleece at Eolchis was to be recovered. A ship was built at Pagasa, the first that was ever attempted. It was built by Argus, instructed by the goddess Minerva. This ship (constructed with sacred timber from Dodona) was said to have been oracular. A select band of heroes, with Jason at their head, engage in the enterprize. Chironor, as some say, Musæus, made a sphere (the first ever made) for their use. They set sail at the rising of the Pleiades ; but authors differ as to their route, both in setting out and returning. At the Bosphorus were two rocks, which used to clash together, and intercept whatever was passing. They let fly a dove ; which, getting through, they followed, and, by the help of Minerva, escaped. After many difficulties, they succeed, and Jason brings off the prize, and Medea, the daughter of king Æetes ; who, enraged, fits out some ships, pursues them, cuts off their retreat, and compels them to return another way. At length they arrive in Greece, sacrifice to the gods, and consecrate the ship to Neptune.

Although this story carries with it the air of romance, and is replete with contradictions and absurdities, yet it has been admitted as a his-

torical fact by Herodius, Diodorus, and Strabo, among the ancients; with every Grecian mythologist; by Clemens, Eusebius, and Syncellus, among the Christian fathers; and among the moderns, by Scaliger, Petavius, archbishop Usher, Dr. Jackson; and though last, not least in our estimation, by sir Isaac Newton! From this we may see what errors have arisen from ignorance and prejudice—errors that have given birth to the numerous *mystic* characters, whose lives of wonder have swelled the volumes, and obscured the pages of history. “The mystic offspring of error, observes Mackay, are the figerative children of falsehood, whose miraculous recitals have instilled into the mind of man that poison which has been productive of his greatest woe—the only antidote to which must flow from the throne of truth, when he shall allow himself to be guided by reason, for it is that alone which distinguishes the man from the brute.”

It is evident that the story of the Argonautics, as well as that of Noah, was taken from the mythology and rites of the Egyptians, and, by length of time, both of them became obscure in consequence of being transmitted in hieroglyphical representations. In the account of the *Argo* or the *Ark* is figured the preserving from the annual inundations the people of that country; and, as both the Greeks and the Jews had frequent intercourse with the Egyptians, the recollection of these allegories and emblems were preserved, and afterwards converted into real histories as suited the particular views of the writers of these nations.

In other countries besides Egypt, an ark or ship was introduced into their mysteries, and often carried about in their festivals. In its side was a door, by which the entrance to death and darkness was signified, and the exit as a return to life. Hence the opening and shutting of it were religiously observed. In the ark said to have been constructed by Noah, there was also a door in its side for ingress and egress. Lucian informs us that Deucalion perceived the water by which the earth was deluged sink into an aperture in the earth and disappear: he built altars, and raised a temple to Juno over the aperture, as a monument of the destruction which happened, and of his own deliverance. In like manner, the Bible informs us that when the deluge was over, and the water had subsided, Noah raised an altar unto the Lord and offered sacrifices. It is believed even at this day, that the remains of the ark, of which Berosus wrote so many ages ago, are still to be seen on Mount Macis, the name given to Mount Ararat by the Armenians. Chardin, who tells this story, also mentions a monk named James, who, “prepossessed with the opinion of this hill being assuredly that on which the ark rested after the deluge, formed the design of going to its top, or of dying in the attempt. He got half way up, but never could mount higher; for, after climbing all the day he was miraculously carried back, in his sleep at night, to the spot whence he had set out in the morning. This continued for a considerable time; when at length God listened to the monk’s prayers, and agreed to satisfy his desire in part. For this object he sent to James by an angel a piece of the ark; exhorting him through the same messenger not to fatigue himself in climbing the mountain, as God had forbidden its access to mankind.” The fact is, Ararat is one of the highest mountains on the globe. Half way from the top, it is covered

with everlasting snow, and those who have wished to climb it have been arrested by the excessive cold before they had performed half the distance. Thus the nations, without a miracle, are foiled in their attempts to reach the summit in order to search for the remains of the ark.

There can be no doubt that many parts of our globe were at one time or other submersed in water, or powerfully acted upon by some natural convulsion. How often have the bounds set by Nature or by art been broken through by irruptions of the ocean, by immoderate rains, or by subterraneous waters. From these causes, whole islands have been swallowed up; large tracts of continent drowned; mountains changed into whirlpools, and from land into sea. Cities with their inhabitants, as well as cultivated fields and woods, with the beasts belonging to them, have perished by these natural irruptions, which are peculiar to no country nor confined to any period. But to infer from these partial and local devastations, the natural consequence of fixed and established laws, that this globe was, at one period, entirely covered with water, is to infer a physical impossibility. The beds of shells and other marine strata every where found at a great distance from the ocean, clearly demonstrate that they were deposited at a period when the places where they lie formed the bed or shores of the sea. But that this deposition was affected at once by a universal deluge, is contradicted by the laws of gravitation as well as those of fluids. Dr. Burnet, who examined this subject with more attention and impartiality than any other Christian divine or Bible expounder, admits, that, after the closest and most exact calculations as to the *quantity* of water it would take to cover the tops of the highest mountains, he had ascertained "it must at least exceed the magnitude of *eight oceans*." He farther admits "so great a quantity of waters can nowhere be found, though we exhaust all the treasures of water either in heaven or earth, and add, besides, the subterranean water;" and that "howsoever, or from what place soever this prodigious mass of waters was brought upon the earth, there could be no means of removing them; or any possible method found out of taking away such a mighty heap of water." From these premises this learned and celebrated author rationally concluded, "that our present earth is not subject to a deluge; nor is it capable of it by its shape or elevation." (*Archæologiæ Philosophicæ*, c. 4. p. 40.)

Father Mersenna, also a celebrated philosopher, has likewise proved from exact observation that the most violent storms produce no more than an inch and a half of water in depth in the space of half an hour, which amounts to only six feet in a day. Now the rain which caused the deluge lasted but forty days. Admitting the highest mountain an elevation of only two miles, which is one third less than their height, it must follow, that to reach their tops, instead of surmounting them, there must have fallen from the sky in twenty-four hours 125 feet of water, instead of six produced in the greatest storms—a fall which exceeds possibility, and the power of Nature.

To be continued.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Priestly Barbarities.—During my stay in Spain and Portugal, from the year 1812 to 1814, I have often, says a traveller, been an ocular witness of the depravity of friars, whom I have seen, late at night, revelling in public houses amidst courtesans and other infamous characters; and in the conversation of drunkenness have heard them indulge in the most blasphemous expressions. One evening, on returning from the opera at Lisbon, I went into a well known public house, where I met the guardian of capuchins, brandishing a tremendous stiletto, and compelling every body present to drink the health of his mistress, whose accomplishments he extolled in the most revolting language. It is a common practice, both in Lisbon and Oporto, that while a reverend friar is paying his addresses to a married woman in her own bed room, the husband, who perceives his sandals left at the door, does not attempt to intrude upon the hermit's happiness, but respects those mute sentinels as the messengers of their master's commands. One evening, in Cadiz, having, according to appointment, called on a lady, I soon perceived by her embarrassment, that she was laboring under some fear which she wished to conceal from me; when, having eagerly pressed her to decypher the mystery, I on a sudden saw issuing from a remote corner of the room a stout half dressed friar, who in a thundering voice commanded me to leave the house. I did not lose my self possession, but, having cocked my pistol, soon tamed the reverend into submission. We became immediately good friends, and during my stay in Cadiz he was the most zealous and active promoter of my pleasures. In Naples, and in Rome herself, the best and most efficient interposers in love intrigues are friars, who, under the pretext of presenting fruits and flowers to gentlemen travellers, contrive to introduce themselves at the several hotels, and thus commence with them an immoral but profitable intercourse.

The two following atrocious specimens of the debauched habits of friars, bleuded with the most unexampled cruelty, happened in the kingdom of Naples in the year 1807; and, as I was eye witness, both at the trial and the execution of the reverend malefactors, I can speak with perfect confidence of being believed. The first took place at Garigliano, a few miles from Naples. A very young and handsome girl, the daughter of the principal innkeeper of that village, was in the constant habit of going every evening, towards dusk, to the church of the Franciscans, in order to partake of the usual holy prayers. On one of those evenings she was missed by her anxious parents, who, in conjunction with her intended husband, searched every place and made every inquiry in order to regain the object of their affections. Several weeks passed away without gaining the least clue to this most distressing mystery, until, with the exception of the desolate lover, every individual of her family had given her entirely up. This affectionate young man, who, since the fatal loss of his beloved friend, had become an assiduous visitor at that same church, happened one evening, both from lassitude and sorrow, to fall asleep in one of the confessional pews, where he remained unperceived, and was thus shut up in the church. In the middle of the night he was

on a sudden awoke by the appearance of several friars, with torches in their hands, dragging after them a woman quite naked, whom he soon recognized for the dear object of his love. Unable to rescue her from the grasp of these armed assassins, and fearful of sharing the same fate which he perceived was pending upon her, he had the stoicism to remain a quiet spectator to that atrocious tragedy. The poor girl, amid her desolating cries, and the blasphemous yells of those holy monsters, was dragged to the brink of an open vault, where in spite of her heart piercing entreaties, she was inhumanly stabbed and precipitated into it. The terrified lover immediately on the morning gave information to the police, who caused the convent to be surrounded by soldiers, the culprits secured, their crime proved, and their punishment executed. The second case, no less horrible in all its features, happened in the city of Naples. A Franciscan friar, who for many years had kept company with a woman, by whom he had three children, formed a fresh connection with another female, who, with her religious paramour, plotted the destruction of her rival. One morning the friar prevailed upon his former artless victim to spend with him a day in the country, and take all her children with her. The unsuspecting female readily acquiesced in the reverend monster's wishes, and took along with her only two children, the eldest having gone to school. As soon as this little company had reached a thick forest, a few miles from the city, the infuriated friar despatched both the mother and the children; and, wishing to complete the destruction of the whole family, went in search of the eldest girl, whom, under pretext that her mother wanted to see her, he took away with him, and made her share the same horrible fate. This atrocious murder remained concealed for a few days only; when king Joseph, hunting in that same forest, came to the spot where the mother and her innocent children had been butchered, and perceived some of their limbs hanging from the trees: in this manner the whole mysterious transaction was revealed, and the many circumstances were brought to light. The two culprits were executed, and the reverend was not even allowed the privilege of taking off the dress of his own order.

Divination.—There always has been, and ever will be, a strong disposition in human nature to inquire into that which has been wisely concealed from their knowledge,—the events of futurity. This propensity was formerly extremely prevalent, and was not then, as now, wholly confined to the lower orders of society; so far from it, indeed, that there were few nobles or ladies of the court, even to majesty itself, who disdained to consult an astrologer, or “cunning man.” The Jews, taking advantage of this disposition for oracular intelligence, when the spirit of prophecy ceased among them, pretended to a new kind of revelation, which they called Bath-col, that is, “the daughter of a voice,” because it succeeded the oracular voice delivered from the mercy seat, when they consulted God by Urim and Thummim. They pretended that it was a voice from heaven, and some say it was attended with a loud clap of thunder. We have several instances of this oracle in the Talmud: one will be sufficient, and serve as a specimen. “Rabbi Jochanan and rabbi Simeon Ben Lachhis, wishing to see their friend the rabbi Samuel,

a doctor of Babylon, said, 'Let us follow the hearing of Bath-col.' Accordingly, travelling near a school, they heard a boy reading these words from the first book of Samuel, 'And Samuel died.' Whence they inferred that their friend was dead, which was as they afterwards discovered, correct." The Bath-col of the Jews was not unlike the *Sortes vigilianæ*, of the heathens, differing merely in this particular, that in the former, the first words they happened to meet with upon opening a book of their poetry was a kind of oracle, whereby they predicted future events; and in the latter, when they appealed to Bath-col, the first words they heard from any one's mouth were considered as a voice from heaven, directing them in their inquiries.

The Christians were far from being entirely free from this superstition; they frequently used the scriptures in a way similar to that in which the pagans did the works of Virgil. It was practised by Herodius, emperor of the east, in the beginning of the seventh century; for, being at war with Cotives, king of Persia, and in doubt, after a successful campaign, where to take up his winter quarters, he consulted the scriptures in the above mentioned manner, and was by that determined. It was the practice in France during several ages to use this kind of divination at the consecration of a bishop, in order to discover his life, manners, and future behavior. It was the Normans, however, who introduced this custom into England; and we are informed by the chronicles of the times, that at the consecration of William, the second Norman bishop of Norwich, the words which first occurred on opening the Bible were, "not this man, but Barabbas." Shortly after which William died, and was succeeded by Herbert de Lozinga, a man well known for his rapacious and avaricious disposition, ready to do any thing for gain. At the consecration of this Herbert de Lozinga, the words which first presented themselves were those addressed by Christ to the traitor Judas, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" This circumstance, adds the chronicle, so affected Herbert, that he thoroughly repented his crimes, the principle of which had been simony under William Rufus, and in expiation of them founded the cathedral church of Norwich, the first stone of which he laid in the year 1096. This superstition, is far from being yet wholly extinct, while the desire of penetrating into the gloom of futurity will never be entirely eradicated from the human breast, although education, knowledge, and the press have, at the present time, considerably diminished its domain.

Armenian Cathedral.—Chardin writes of this place, in 1673, that "It is, as it were, the holy of holies with Armenian Christians, the spot for which they have the highest veneration. They call it Ecsmiazin; that is to say, the descent of the only begotten son, or the only begotten son descended. The monks show in their sacristy at this place many very splendid vestments, crosses, and chalices of gold, silver lamps, and silver chandeliers of an extraordinary size. The greater part of these riches proceed from papal munificence, and bear as ample testimony to Romish credulity as to the trickery of the Armenian church. Amid the treasure may be seen, also, many shrines of silver, and of silver gilt. The principal relics here are, according to the guardian monks, the upper part of

the body of St. Repsima, an arm and a thigh of St. Caiana, an arm of St. Gregory, surnamed the *Illuminator*, upon account of his having converted the Armenians; a rib of St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, a finger of St. Peter, and two fingers of John the Baptist. The monks of the place affirm, that the body of this saint rests within the conventional church of their order, near Arzeroom; that Leontius, bishop of Cæsarea, gave it to their first patriarch; and that, after having been for three hundred and fifty years at Eitch-mai-adzen, it was transported to its present abode. These monks, who are the chief doctors of the Armenian church, are ignorant of the histories which relate that the body of John the Baptist was burnt to ashes by command of Julian the apostate. The people of the convent assert that they did for a long time possess two of the nails with which the sacred hands of Jesus Christ were fixed to the cross; but that of these one is now preserved in Diarbekir, and the other in Georgia: furthermore, Abbas the Great pillaged their treasures of the veritable spear, and of the coat without seam, with which he enriched that of the kings of Persia at Ispahan. The Armenians maintain, as an article of their faith, that that is the identical spot where their apostle Gregory saw Jesus Christ one Sunday evening, while at prayers, when he spoke to the saint. They aver, that Jesus Christ drew around St. Gregory, with a ray of light, the plan of this church, and ordered the saint to build it according to that figure. They add, that at this same time did the earth open, upon the spot where the stone now stands; that our Lord cast into the abyss all the devils that were in the Armenian temples, where they delivered oracles; and that then St. Gregory covered the hole with a marble.

Religious Pantomimes.—On one of the hills near Naples there is situate a village, whose rustic habitations are overshadowed by lofty pines, green laurels, and the fragrant orangeries of the neighboring villas, in the arrangement of which Nature has been more consulted than art. There the votaries of ancient usages may enjoy the satisfaction of imagining themselves in the very bosom of the middle age—of those blessed days into which some of the musty brains of our own times would fain reconduct their restive contemporaries. At the festivity of Easter, an immense statue of St. John the baptist issues from the parish church of Arenella, for such is the name of the village, borne on the shoulders of four lusty peasants, who every year dispute the honor of being crushed beneath its ponderous load. The figure moves along at a slow pace, and gives one the idea of a person who has lost something. It turns restlessly about from the right to the left; it goes prying into every door, and finds its way into every court yard and down every street. It was thus, perhaps, that, in the Eleusinian mysteries, Ceres went about in search of her daughter Prosepine who had disappeared from her eyes, amid the yellow plains of Sicily. After many fruitless researches, it seems, if it be not very much mistaken, to hear at a distance the festive hymns that announce the resurrection of the Saviour. It would fain hasten in that direction, and make some advance to meet him, but Mary Magdalen, who has followed him at some short distance, comes to remind him of the promise he has made to the virgin not to monopolize

the first embraces of her son. St. John bows to this request, and politely falls back, to yield to the virgin the happiness of so propitious a greeting. But the heart of a mother has anticipated his coming. Behold she advances with majestic pace, amid the loud congratulations of the people, who advise her to lay aside the black mantle in which she is wrapt. In effect, at the appearance of the redeemer, no longer habited as a man of sorrows, but resplendent in gold and jewels, the holy virgin shows herself to the longing eyes of the spectators, at the same moment peopling the air with a number of birds which escape from her bosom. The people dance around the sacred group, which re-enters the church amid the ringing of bells and the firing of small mortars.

But a still better pantomime, of the sacred kind, is that represented on holy Thursday, at Soccive, a small village in the distric of Aversa. A strapping bellman, arrayed like the man of Nazareth, crowned with thorns and bearing on his shoulders a ponderous cross, sets out to ascend the hill of Calvary. His escort consists of twenty or thirty fellows dressed as Roman soldiers, with helmets and cuirasses. From time to time the sacred victim makes a feint to fall under the load of the cross, and the executioners that follow drive him along, like very Jews, by blows of their lances, by kicks and cuffs, applied in such good earnest that the poor fellow remains most soundly pummelled, and his only consolation is that such harsh treatment will be turned to good account by being accepted, in the other world, in expiation of his sins. Meanwhile the Virgin and the Magdalen, bathed in tears, follow the redeemer; who, after traversing the principal paths about the village, returns, accompanied by the whole population, who are highly edified, and melted to compassion at the affecting spectacle. This sacred masquerade generally terminates with a reconciliation of the Jews and the man of Nazareth, who, without laying aside their costumes, repair to a neighbouring tavern to solace the fatigues and sufferings of the day.

Origin of Tithes in England.—When Ethelwolfe, the Dane, reigned king of England, A. D. 852, he procured Swithin, a monk who had the care of his education, to be chosen bishop of Winchester. This bishop prevailed on Ethelwolfe to enact a law which gave one tenth of the land to the church, on condition that prayers should be said for the soul of the king every Wednesday in all the churches forever. This was the origin of tithes; and the grant was solemnized by a pilgrimage to Rome, where the charter was laid on the great altar of St. Peter, and confirmed by the pope. The monkish historians record a vast multitude of miracles performed by St. Swithin, who was canonized the same year of his death, which happened A. D. 865. He directed his remains to be interred in the churchyard rather than under the chancel of the minister. But the monks, on his being canonized, thought it impious to let the saint rest in a grave in the open air, and appointed the 15th of July to remove the body into the choir. "It rained so violently on that and the succeeding days," that they set aside their design as heretical and blasphemous, and erected a chapel over his tomb, where innumerable miracles were wrought. From this the monkish superstition arose, that if it rains on the 15th of July, or St. Swithin's day, it will rain forty days more.

The Learned Horse.—In the reign of queen Elizabeth, a man named Bankes got a great deal of money by showing about his horse; which, sir Kenelm Digby says, in the thirty-seventh chapter of his Treatise "Of Bodies," "would restore a glove to the due owner, after his master had whispered that man's name in his ear," and "would tell the just number of pence in any piece of silver coyn, barely showed him by his master." When the attractions of this extraordinary steed began somewhat to subside, Bankes took it to France; there the priests stirred up the populace to tear him and his horse to pieces, as wizards. Bankes shamed them of their rash conclusions, and proved to the contrary, by making his horse bow at the sign of the cross, which it was thought a wizard was prevented from doing by his infernal contract with his Satanic majesty. He then proceeded to Rome, but there both he and his steed were actually burnt, on the exploded supposition of magic.

TO OUR PATRONS.

As the second volume, which will complete the first year of the *Correspondent*, is drawing to a close, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) *in advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months *in advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that, no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if *city* subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year *at our office*, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated

in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

Almanac.—The Editor of the *Correspondent* is now preparing for the press an *Almanac* modelled on rational principles, and entirely divested of those puerilities and absurdities which characterize every work of that description now in circulation. It will contain all useful and necessary calculations, and such other matters as may have a tendency to enlarge, not to paralyze, the human mind. The retail price will be 6 1-4 cents; but to those who take 25 copies for distribution, a discount of 25 per cent. will be given. Such as are disposed to encourage this undertaking are requested to give notice as soon as possible of the number of copies they may require, as it is intended to put this work to press early in December. Any communication calculated to render this *Almanac* useful or interesting, may be left at No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library.

Free Press Association.—The members of this Association are reminded, that the regular monthly meeting takes place, in the Temple of Arts, William street, tomorrow, the 2d of December, at 10 o'clock forenoon. As business of importance will come before the meeting, a full attendance is requested.

. Arrangements are now making to introduce a regular course of scientific lectures (in connection with the theological lectures) at the meetings of the Association. Due notice will be given when the first of these lectures will be delivered.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

Paine's Theological Works, complete, 8vo., bound and gilt—\$2; bds. \$1.50.

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View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GOD OF THE CHRISTIANS.

Mr. Editor—Notwithstanding all that has been said to expose the character of Jehovah, the god of the Jews, as exhibited in the sacred books of that people, it appears to me that the attributes attributed by the Christians to their deity are not less repugnant, absurd, and inconsistent. Although they have somewhat softened the picture, and united the quality of infinite *power*, in the Jewish god, with that of infinite *goodness*, they have so encumbered their idol with other infinities as to render him utterly unable to act. They are constantly ascribing to this deity the honor of all the transient or partial *good* which takes place in the world; but they dare not, in the slightest degree, lay to his charge one of the many *evils*, although they profess to believe that he is the author of all things.

Is it because we experience many pleasant sensations and feelings peculiar to our nature—without which, indeed, life would be a gloomy scene of miserable existence—is it because we experience these transient pleasures that we are to infer the infinite goodness of a deity? These glimpses of pleasure, which are always accompanied with a corresponding evil, either to ourselves, to our fellow men, or to other animals, appear like the lucid intervals of a lunatic, which are only calculated to show him his miserable situation. These trifling pleasures, which we all so fondly pursue, have nothing in them real or substantial. No sooner are we revelling in the midst of our enjoyments, than we begin to feel how far short we are of real satisfaction. Often do we feel, and that most heavily, too, the sting of sorrow growing out of the delusive pleasures which we just before so eagerly pursued.

If the deity whom the Christians adore had formed us with desires to obtain and enjoy pure and unmixed good, it is certainly nothing less than a mockery of these desires to hold up pleasures to our view that we can seldom obtain. We are continually pursuing what we conceive to be splendid objects; and though we sometimes, by great exertions, obtain them, how do they crumble to nothing; vanish in our fond grasp, and leave us the fatigued and disappointed dupes of our own imagination. After all, the fault is not ours: these unsubstantial pleasures—our desire to obtain them—and our grievous disappointment when occasionally obtained—are things all planned out by the infinitely powerful and good god of the Christians.

If the pleasures which the world affords were real and universal benefits to all living creatures, then might the Christians say that their deity

had a benevolent intention in producing them. But, as that is not the case, and the benefit of one class of beings is the disadvantage of another, they have little cause, indeed, to boast of the infinite power and goodness of their god. If we judge of his power and goodness from the perfection of his works, it must be allowed on all hands that the world is far from being perfect; consequently there is no reason to pronounce it the work of an infinitely good and powerful being. But let us reason fairly on the subject:

If a huge piece of machinery was exhibited to our view, by the operation of which both good and evil were produced to every person connected with it: if those beings were placed there by the maker, and forced to remain with it, the same as animals were forced to remain on this earth: if the artificer, having power to make the machine go without producing any evil whatever, stood patiently by, and looked with indifference on the misery that his workmanship produced—because, forsooth, it produced some little good along with the evil, should we infer that he was a good, a humane, and a virtuous being? Should we not be inclined to say, that it would have been better if he and his machine had never existed? Should we not be apt to say, that he was either deficient of the power or the will to make it better? Or, if we supposed that he had both the power and the will, and did not make it perfect, should we not conclude that he took pleasure in the evil as well as the good which it produced? and, therefore, could not be called a good being. If, then, we judge impartially of the Christian deity, from what is said to be his works, the mildest opinion we can form will be, that he could not make it better, and, therefore, cannot be almighty.

It appears as if the Christian deity, either from want of power, or from want of will, or, perhaps, from want of both, has only given a certain portion of happiness to this world; and has, as it were, carelessly thrown it down, and left his creatures to struggle with one another about its possession and division. Hence it is, that the good of one creature produces the evil of another in almost every instance. The panther in her den is fondly suckling and caressing her young whelps, and anxiously expecting the arrival of her connubial mate with provisions. He does not return, having been slain by man while endeavoring to procure the food that was so necessary for supporting the mother and her little ones. Hunger at length impels her to sally from her den, with main erect, and eyes flashing fire on every object that seemed likely to impede her progress, or to satisfy her craving stomach. She had not proceeded far, when her keen scented nose informed her that some prey was near. In a moment she cast her fierce eyes on a little child playing by the side of a rivulet, and plucking such wild flowers as the spot afforded. The voracious animal instantly rushed on her prey, and bore off in triumph the hopes of two fond parents, who, at no great distance, were busy at their daily labor. The anxious care of the mother caused her at almost every instant to cast her eyes towards her little innocent, to prevent danger, and to watch its sports. While thus employed, she caught a glance of the ferocious animal passing a height with her little infant in its mouth! "Oh, my god!" she cried, "my child! my child!" and when she observed its white locks waving in the wind, she tore her hair in frantic de-

spair, and ran to the spot where she saw her little innocent a moment before—but, alas! it was gone for ever! Here, then, the Christian deity had all these proceedings under his view; yet he wanted the goodness or the power to prevent them. But this is only one solitary instance of his supineness.

The *partial* evils in the world, say the advocates of the Christian deity, are all productive of *universal good*. But that is an assertion which has never yet been proved. It is, at least, a very weak argument to establish the infinite power and goodness of the deity; because, if he cannot bring forth good without any mixture of evil, he is certainly not infinitely powerful. Such an argument is nothing more than a theological quibble—a mere subterfuge. Even if true, it would only exhibit another capricious feature in the character of their god. Is it any thing like goodness to cause misery and sorrow to be the lot of some beings, and then turn it to the advantage and pleasure of others? But it is exactly in conformity with the plan of punishing the innocent children for the guilt of their parents, and his only son for the wickedness of mankind. Such proceedings remind me of the actions of a madman, who capriciously vents his spleen on one person, and, to make amends, bestows his trifles on another.

Disease is a *partial* evil; but will it ever be productive of *universal good*? It may, and frequently does, disable a man, so as to prevent him from performing the duties of his situation, which would do good to some other person who happened to fill that situation. But then the good is only partial, and just in proportion to the evil which produced it. It is evident, then, that no number of partial evils will ever produce a universal good. They will only be followed by equal partial benefits; because there are many partial evils which can never produce any good whatever; nor would an infinite number of these partial evils be of the smallest service to any individual.

In many cases, the constitution and form of animals prove that they are designed for cruel and evil purposes; and, if we examine minutely, we shall find that all *moral* evils have physical evils for their origin. If all mankind had been well constructed by the deity, then would they have all conducted themselves morally well. But, as that has not been the case, the evil and the good must be traced back to the god of the Christians, who, according to them, is the great original; and no person but a theological quibbler will ever attempt to shift them to any secondary object. Is it not evident that man, as well as all other animals, must act according to his natural organization? If *well* organized, his actions will be good; and if *ill*, his actions will be ill accordingly.

A man on whom the deity has bestowed strong natural propensities and passions, and who is not gifted with a reason calculated to keep them in control, is led, by the strength of those propensities and passions, into bad habits; and from bad habits into worse actions; till at length, by distressing circumstances, he betakes himself to nocturnal depredations. He attacks the cottage of a countryman, whom he knows to have amassed a little wealth by his care and industry. This determined person breaks open the door; assails the industrious man, and only overcomes him by plunging a dagger in his bosom. While he lies weltering

in his gore, the blood stained villain is busy plundering the house of what the good man had intended for the benefit of himself and family. His wife, in the utmost despair, stands crying between her dying husband and her little children. The ruffian, by a kind look and affectionate words, endeavors to gain her over to his purpose. She screamed out in the most frantic manner, and entreated him to kill her also—"but spare, oh! spare," she cried, "my little children." When the desperado saw that his endeavors to gain his wishes were abortive, to quash all noise, and prevent detection, he instantly silenced her by a mortal stab with the dagger. She fell, streaming with blood, on the lifeless corpse of her deceased husband. The murderer then gathered up his booty, and went off to revel with harlots and other loose company. Here, then, was left a poor and helpless young family, without a kind and fostering parent to protect and support them.

Such a case as this clearly demonstrates, that this infinitely good and powerful god of the Christians gives himself no trouble to prevent evil. Could such a scene of partial evil ever produce a good to counterbalance it? It could produce little good, indeed, to the poor, helpless children of the murdered parents to know that the murderer was taken, tried, condemned, and hanged for the deed. But behold the culprit at his latter end, attended by Christian priests, busily employed in wheedling over their god to accept the guilty, blood stained villain into heaven! Yes, this murderer, whom no decent or humane man in the world would have kept company with for a single moment, must be wafted to the mansions of the blessed! And for what reason? Why, because he was a believer in the Christian mythology! He confessed that he always believed that the atoning blood of Jesus Christ was shed as a ransom for his sins, and was all sufficient to cleanse him from his manifold iniquities. His last words were, "I always believed, and I have great hopes that I shall be saved; as a proof of which, I feel great horror at the deed that brought me to this shameful end." This satisfied the ghostly fathers, who bade him farewell, and concluded that he was a chosen vessel. The solemn ceremony of prayer being ended, he was launched from the gallows into the company of Christian devotees, martyrs, saints, angels, and gods!

Such is a true picture of the life and death of many a Christian; and such are the proceedings carried on in this evil world, though the Christians say that it was planned and executed by their infinitely good and powerful god. If it be so, we may reasonably say, considering the infinite power and goodness he is said to be possessed of, that he has very little honor by his work.

To be continued.

THE "LORD'S PRAYER."

Mr. Editor—If the beneficent author of Nature paid any attention to the hypocritical prayers of murdering oppressors, public plunderers, false swearers, fraudulent dealers, adulterers, fornicators, cut throats, and a mass of every thing that is mean, vicious, base, and wicked, assembled together in churches and chapels, muttering their indolent and wicked petitions, he would surely strike them dumb! Their ignorance

leads them to suppose, that by holding their monkish meetings once a week, the sins of the six days are forgiven ; and that they may go on in sin as they think proper for the ensuing week ! Among their numerous hypocritical prayers, there is none which shows ingratitude and wickedness so much as that which is called the Lord's Prayer. Let us read this prayer, and then presume to anticipate the answer :

Prayer :—" Our father *which* art in heaven, hallowed be thy name : thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven : "

Answer to the rich :—As being the author of Nature and every thing that is good, I am the father of all : my kingdom is the universe ; is already come ; has always been ! My will be done on earth, as it is in heaven, is, that you are all equal ; and, as I have showered down blessings in abundance upon you all, that you, the few, will monopolize the whole to the exclusion of the many.

Answer to the poor :—As you are all my children, do not imitate your rich brethren, by tearing to pieces all who are weaker than yourselves ; therefore cease your hypocrisy ; but be you kind and benevolent, one towards another, as I am towards you all.

Prayer :—" Give us this day our daily bread. "

Answer to the rich :—Ungrateful hypocrites ! If I dealt justly with you, I should, at least, strike you dumb. Have I not made the earth to be always fruitful, to produce in abundance, and that without any care or labor on your part ? Have you not consumed your own bread, in abundance, and wasted the bread of thousands who are a thousand times more worthy than yourselves ?

Answer to the poor :—Contemptible, cowardly hypocrites : to ask bread, which I have given you in abundance : have I not given the earth a prolific, increasing quality ; which, with a little labor, will produce sufficient for all your wants, and a hundred fold more ? Have I not given you strength and genius to enable you to cultivate and to keep it all amongst yourselves, instead of suffering a lazy, contemptible set of drones to take the principal, and leave you scarcely enough to keep yourselves alive to labor for them ? Is it not enough that I have supplied all your wants a hundred fold ; that I have given you ability to cause a just distribution of them ; but I must come amongst you, and even share out to you those numerous blessings ? No : if your ungrateful cowardice will not suffer you to make use of the strength which I have given you to take your just share, then let plenty be the heaven of the rich, and starvation the hell of the poor, until you make use of the power, and change situations with your lazy oppressors, dealing to every one his just reward according to his merit.

Prayer :—" And forgive our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. "

Answer to the rich :—Insolent, impudent hypocrites ; this is one proof amongst the many, that you mean nothing by your prayers but to keep up a monkish, superstitious reverence for your unjust usurpations. Do you forgive trespasses when you pursue a victim to the gallows for stealing a paltry trinket ? when you inflict the greatest punishment for crimes which, but for your numerous oppressions, they would have never thought of committing ? But the time is near at hand when the poor

will have the knowledge and full confidence of their own strength ; and if they should then sacrifice the whole of you, they would not be able to retaliate one hundredth part of the trespasses that you have committed against them.

*Answer to the poor :—*To forgive the trespasses of your oppressors when it is in your to stop the further trespassing of those trespassers, denotes a hypocritical, cowardly apathy ; a crime that you have always been guilty of. If you had shown more forgiveness to those beneath you, and less forgiveness to those above you, you would then have had some little apology for the forgiveness you hypocritically ask of me : as you have the means in your own hands, I leave you to your own fate ; your oppressors will keep trespassing on you till you can no longer bear them : you will then find your strength, and bear them down till you trespass them into the earth ; a reciprocal forgiveness will then take place, and I shall forgive you all ! then will my kingdom come ; that will be the reign of justice, happiness, and peace.

Prayer :—“ Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

*Answer to the rich :—*Base hypocrites ; you wish to impute your numerous crimes to being led into temptation ; you ought rather to ask to be led into temptation, that you might show your fortitude by resisting its allurements. Where man's reason does not teach him to resist temptation, it shows a vicious, depraved appetite. Who leads you into temptation when, with lustful eyes, at your monkish meetings, you are ogling your neighbors' wives ; and they, with equally lustful eyes turned up to heaven, return the ogle ; or when you wantonly lay snares to seduce and debauch the innocent ; or, when surfeited with all natural enjoyments, you descend so many degrees below the brute beast, and indulge in unnatural propensities ? You can deliver yourselves from evil, by refraining from doing it ; if you do not, the people will be led into temptation to try their strength, when they will deliver you from evil, by depriving you of the power of doing any more mischief.

*Answer to the poor :—*Reason should teach you not to do wrong, let the temptation be ever so strong. If temptation should lead you to do good ; that is, to embrace the opportunity of overthrowing those who have been long determined on your slavery ; if you do not immediately seize the opportunity, you will be deservedly tortured and oppressed to the end of your lives.

Prayer :—“ For thine is the kingdom, the power and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.”

*Answer to the rich :—*Ye selfish hypocrites ; you don't care who has the kingdom and glory, whilst you can have the power and the profit.

*Answer to the poor :—*The kingdom is mine, the glory is mine ; the power of destroying the locusts I have given to you : until you make use of that power your labor will be in vain : they will destroy the fruits of all your labor. Then, when you shall cease your hypocrisy, and make use of the strength that I have given you, and have courage to destroy all the venomous vermin, then you will for ever after enjoy uninterrupted plenty and happiness, harmony and love ; and then, without any sanctified hypocrisy, you may say, Amen.

If the parsons were to make use of their forcible persuasions among their bigotted hearers to inculcate morality, and particularly to reprobate those different vices which they well know they are addicted to, it would have some effect amongst the bigots ; but, instead of which, the bigots fancy that all their actions are right, because they find Mr. parson is always very willing to share in their vices, their pleasures, and their profits!

ARISTIDES.

SUPERSTITION AND ATHEISM.

Mr. Editor—Plutarch, in his Treatise on Superstition, undertakes to prove that atheism is far less hurtful to men than superstition. He explains superstition to be the continual dread of a deity no less mischievous than powerful ; which is the most odious character that can belong to any intellectual being ; and has given birth to those shocking notions and gloomy rites in religious worship that have made mankind the dupes of designing knaves, and taught fierce bigots first to exercise and then to sanctify the most inhuman barbarities. "The atheist," says Plutarch, "knows no God at all ; the superstitious none but what is monstrous and terrible ; mistaking for dreadful what is most kind and beneficent, for tyrannical, what is truly paternal, for mischievous, what is full of providential care ; nay, for a being brutally savage and fierce, what is perfect goodness itself. Shall then the atheist be accounted impious, and not this superstitious person much more so ? I, for my part, had rather men should say there is no such man as Plutarch, than that he was a man unconstant, fickle, prone to anger, ready to revenge himself on the slightest occasion, and full of indignation of mere trifles, &c. ; yet this is no more than what the superstitious think of the deity, whom, of consequence, they must hate as well as fear. They worship, indeed, and adore him ; and so they do even those tyrants they would be glad of an opportunity to destroy. Atheism contributes not in the least to superstition ; but superstition having given out so hideous an idea of the deity, some have been frightened into the utter disbelief of any such being, because they think it much better, and more reasonable, there should be no deity, than one whom they see more reason to hate and abominate than to love, honor, and reverence."

ZENO.

PECULIAR CRIME OF THE CHRISTIANS.

Mr. Editor—The Christians commit a crime peculiar to themselves—that despicable one of decrying, traducing, and vilifying man ; calling themselves and the rest of the human race all manner of bad names ; designating them by the worst of epithets, and regarding mankind (at least, by their language) as the production of an undetermined or doating god, who made man to vent upon him his deliberate and unappeasable wrath. What folly can possess the mad fools, to underrate and run down the human species as they do ? If there be an almighty creator of the universe, himself uncreate, as they say, it is surely paying him, as the inventor and maker of this world, and of man in his own likeness, with a living soul,—and he, too, being all wise, all good, and all com-

potent,—a very bad compliment, to say nothing worse of it, to be continually railing at his handy works; and telling him and his world that he has made a set of wretches who are a disgrace and a reproach to him; that they are helpless worms, crawling reptiles, prone only to evil; full of filth and wickedness; contaminated with every vice, and fit for nothing but to be sent off to hell, to be burnt alive, or roasted with all their feelings eternally acute. God's rage and fury calculated to burn forever! Vicious, villainous, and terrible as this is, we may smile at the horrid picture; because the natural sense and reason of man discern the origin and absurdity of the tale, and properly impute to the true authors the honor as well as the emolument of the ridiculous and impudent fabrication. Let us form an article in the litany of sense, and pray, "From such an omnipotent, from such religious malignants, from such knaves, fools, and deceivers, and from such merciless teachers, good Reason deliver us!"

SHEBAGO.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE NINTH.

Continued from page 297.

The writer of Genesis says, that "the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. *Fifteen cubits* upwards did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered." If the fifteen cubits mentioned in this verse was intended to mean the height to which the water rose from the *surface* of the earth, it presents nothing like a covering of the "high hills;" for fifteen cubits are only twenty-seven feet. But if it means that the water rose fifteen cubits above the top of the highest mountains, this would involve the narrative in gross absurdity, because it would be impossible that there should be a body of water sufficient for such a purpose, especially when we take the height of all the mountains in the world into the account. The mountains of Andes (observes Palmer) in South America, by far the most elevated land on the surface of the earth, is, at the point of Chimberazo, 20,000 feet above the surface of the ocean. There is, therefore, an immense deficiency of water to answer the purpose of a universal deluge; for as by the law of fluids water uniformly seeks its level, it was necessary that all around the globe the water should have been raised 20,000 feet; otherwise the Andes would not have been covered, and the deluge would not have been universal. To say that God created such a vast body of water for the sole purpose of drowning the world, and all the creatures he had made, and afterward annihilated it, is to assert that which is impossible, and to throw on the moral character of God a sarcasm, at which man ought to be ashamed—at which he ought to blush and be confounded.

As to the Bible ark, the account of it is as embarrassing as the magnitude of the waters. It is said to have been 525 feet in length, 87.1-3

feet in breadth, and 52 1-2 feet in height. Is it possible that so great an assemblage of animals as must have been collected together on this occasion, and the provisions necessary for their support, could be contained in a vessel of these limited dimensions? Even if this difficulty could be got over, can we really believe that Noah and his family, and the multitude of animals which the ark is said to have contained, could possibly continue alive for 150 days, the time the waters prevailed, while the only window in the ark was kept shut during that long period? And how can we imagine that Noah and his three sons could serve out the daily allowance of provisions and water to such a crowd of passengers? Again, how was it that people floating in a vessel closely shut up could tell what was going on without; how far the flood extended, or whether the mountains were covered with it or not? Even if the windows in the ark had been open during the five months the flood continued, its inhabitants could not see objects at any great distance, and much less discern that the waters overflowed and drowned the whole earth. What, therefore, they could not possibly obtain any information of themselves, they could not transmit to others, or hand down records of it to posterity. Nor is it rational to suppose that the person who wrote this story could have invented it altogether himself. He must have gathered it from the traditions of other nations; or, if any part of it was the result of fancy, he must have been led to this in consequence of witnessing some inundation or other convulsion of Nature, that took place during the period in which he lived.

Besides the facts and reasons which I have adduced to disprove the Bible account of a universal deluge, the story is rendered utterly incredible when we consider that at a time not very remote from the period when it is said the whole earth was swept of its inhabitants, the vast and populous empires of Syria, China, Egypt, India, and Ethiopia existed in their greatest splendor. It is impossible that seven or eight persons could people these extensive countries in 150 years; yet, according to Manetho and Herodotus, it was within that period from the date of the flood that Egypt had become extremely populous, and was greatly advanced in the arts and sciences. We have also the authority of Du Halde and other creditable writers for believing that China was then in a similar flourishing condition; and the facts which have latterly transpired respecting Hindostan clearly demonstrate, that there must have existed several powerful nations in that immense tract of country at the very time when the universal deluge is said to have ravaged the earth, who nevertheless were no way affected by it. A French theologian, named Petau, could think of no better way to get rid of these difficulties than to make men by a dash of his pen. He produced what he called an exact calculation of the children, grand children, great grand children, &c., which four men might be supposed to have in the space of 260 years, and he made the number to be 268,719 millions—i. e. many more than would be necessary to people five or six such worlds as ours. According to the Bible, men had no children till very late in life, and even then the number does not appear to have been great; consequently, those swarms which the French jesuit found so easy to produce on paper were impossible in Nature.

The rugged and convulsed appearance which this globe in many places presents has been attributed to the "breaking up of the fountains of the great deep," and to the "opening of the windows of heaven." Plants and trees are said to have been torn up by the roots, and carried along with the current; all buildings demolished; the rocks, hills, and mountains dashed to atoms, and swept from their places; all the products of the sea, as fishes, shells, teeth, bones, &c., carried along with the flood, and thrown upon the earth, or even to the tops of the mountains, promiscuously with other bodies. If this was really the case; if effects so terrible as these accompanied the deluge, how was it possible for so fragile a vessel as the ark to live in so tempestuous an ocean? Where and how was it that Noah and his sons could acquire nautical skill sufficient to enable them to steer their little barque with safety, while surrounded with the moving fragments of immense mountains, and amid the wreck and tumult of a convulsed and falling world? We confess that these things infinitely surpass our comprehension. According to our limited ideas, we can discover nothing in Nature to warrant such an exhibition; while a belief in the perfections of the author of Nature utterly forbids it.

The numerous writers that have labored to support the Bible account have all referred to the traditions scattered over the globe, which relate to a period when it was supposed the race of man was destroyed by an inundation. But these writers do not seem to have been aware, that in seeking for evidence to support their questionable theory in traditions unacknowledged to exist among pagans, they at once give up the importance attached to the Bible history; for if the heathens, without any revelation, could arrive at a knowledge of the fact that a deluge once overwhelmed the universe, it was altogether superfluous to resort to inspiration to furnish information on that subject. It was already spread over the earth. Every nation was acquainted with the occurrence, and with the awful circumstances that attended it. There was, therefore, no need of the interference of Deity to instruct the world in that of which they were already fully instructed.

But it has been asserted that the universal deluge was a miracle of omnipotence, and, therefore, ought not to be judged of or criticised by ordinary rules. It is not said, however, by the author of Genesis, that the event, of which he professes to give a correct history, was any way miraculous. He speaks of it as of an every day occurrence, and as no way calculated to excite curiosity, far less astonishment. There is, therefore, no ground on which to rest the plea of a miracle in this instance. But it is sufficiently clear that, whoever wrote the account, he was altogether ignorant of first principles—an entire stranger to the immutable laws of Nature. Pretenders to inspiration never, indeed, trouble themselves about science or philosophy. They are in a perpetual state of warfare against useful knowledge. Controlled by fanaticism, they shut their eyes to the most palpable facts, while they cling with the greatest fervor to whatever absurdities their perverted imaginations have given birth to. If religious superstition were not blinded by the inherent nature of her own character, she would be ashamed of the gross attempts of the priesthood to impose such stupid tales on mankind as emanations of perfect wisdom. But nothing will tend more to destroy superstition than a persevering at-

tention to the laws of Nature. No man who understands these laws can believe the ridiculous stories with which the Bible is filled. He must be convinced that they are contradicted by physical and moral fitness—unworthy the character of an intelligent deity, and, therefore, meriting sovereign contempt.

MISCELLANEOUS.

BIBLE CONTRADICTIONS.

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| Heaven created the first day.
Gen. i. 1. | Heaven created the second day.
Gen. i. 8. |
| In the image of God made, &c.
Gen. i. 27. | Who is like the Lord. Psalm
lxxxix. 6. |
| Blessed them, and said be fruit-
ful. Gen. i. 28. | Blessed are the barren. Luke
xxiii. 29. |
| All that God created was good.
Gen. i. 31. | I create evil. Isaiah xiv. 7. |
| God rested from all his works.
Gen. ii. 2. | The Father works hitherto. John
v. 17. |
| Not good that man should be
alone. Gen. ii. 18. | Good not to touch a woman. 1
Cor. vii. 1. |
| The woman saw before she eat.
Gen. iii. 6. | The eyes opened after eating.
Gen. iii. 7. |
| Man become like one of us. Gen.
iii. 2. | The Lord thy God is one. Deut.
vi. 4. |
| Gave to her husband and he did
eat. Gen. iii. 16. | The man was not deceived. 1
Tim. ii. 14. |
| Cain marked that he should not
be killed. Gen. iv. 15. | The blood shedder must die. Gen.
ix. 6. |
| Cain went from the presence of
the Lord. Gen. iv. 16. | Where shall I go from thy pre-
sence. Psalm cxxxix. 7. |
| Earth destroyed because of evil.
Gen. vi. 5, 6. | Earth not destroyed because of
evil. Gen. viii. 21. |
| God repented. Gen. vi. 6. | He is not a man to repent. 1
Sam. v. 29. |
| Noah was a righteous man. Gen.
vi. 9. | None righteous, no not one.
Rom. iii. 10. |
| In the first month the waters dry.
Gen. viii. 13. | In the second month. Gen. viii.
14. |
| Seed time and harvest shall never
cease. Gen. viii. 22. | Seven years wherein is none.
Gen. xlv. 6. |
| The fear of you shall be on every
creature. Gen. ix. 2. | The lion turneth not away for
any. Prov. xxx. 30. |
| Divided every man after his
tongue. Gen. x. 5. | The whole earth one tongue.
Gen. xi. 1. |
| God came down to see. Gen.
xi. 5. | I fill heaven and earth. Jer. xxiii.
24. |
| Arphaxad begat Sala. Gen. xi.
13. | Arphaxad begat Cainan. Luke
iii. 36. |

Abraham departed to go into Canaan. Gen. xii. 5.

The land I will give thee. Gen. xiii. 17.

In the fourth generation they shall return. Gen. xv. 16.

There they both swear. Gen. xxi. 31.

I have seen the Lord face to face. Gen. xxxii. 30.

I will bring thee up to Egypt. Gen. xli. 4.

All Jacob's souls seventy. Gen. xli. 27.

Israel worshipped towards his bed's head. Gen. xlvii. 31.

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah till Shiloh come. Gen. xlix. 10.

I will harden Pharoah's heart. Ex. iv. 21.

Ye shall spoil the Egyptians. Exod. iii. 22.

Moses feared. Exod. ii. 14.

I have made thee Pharoah's god. Exod. vii. 1.

All the cattle in Egypt died. Exod. ix. 6.

Israel sojourning 430 days. Ex. xii. 40.

The Lord is a man of war. Ex. xv. 3.

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children. Exod. xx. 4.

God answered by a voice. Exod. xix. 20.

Remember the sabbath. Exod. xx. 8.

Thou shalt not slay the righteous. Exod. xxiii. 7.

Make me a tabernacle to dwell in. Exod. xxv. 8.

He justifieth not the ungodly. Exod. xxxiv. 7.

Their flesh is unclean to you. Lev. xi. 8.

Sanctify yourselves. Lev. xi. 44.

Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife. Lev. xxiii. 16.

He went, not knowing where. Heb. xi. 8.

He gave him not a foot. Acts vii. 5.

In the seventh they did return. Josh. xiv. 1.

Swear not at all. Matt. v. 34.

Thou canst not see his face. Exod. xxxiii. 20.

Jacob died in Egypt. Gen. xlix. 38.

They were seventy-five. Acts vii. 14.

Worshipped, leaning on his staff. Heb. xi. 21.

The sceptre was departed before. Luke iii. 1.

Pharoah hardened his own heart. Exod. viii. 15.

Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, nor rob him. Lev. xix. 13.

He feared not. Heb. xi. 27.

Thou shalt have no other gods but me. Exod. xx. 3.

They put their cattle into their houses. Exod. ix. 20.

Four hundred years. Acts. vii. 6.

A God of peace. Heb. xiii. 20.

The children shall not bear the iniquity, &c. Ezek. xviii. 20.

You never heard his voice. John v. 7.

The priests prophane it blameless. Matt. xii. 5.

I will cut off the righteous and the wicked. Ezra xxi. 3.

The Lord dwelleth not in temples. Acts vii. 48.

He doth justify the ungodly. Rom. iv. 5.

There is nothing unclean. Rom. xiv. 14.

I, the Lord, sanctify. Ezek. xxxvii. 28.

Her husband's brother shall go into her. Deut. xxv. 5.

Thou shalt not revenge. Lev. xix. 18.

Not die the common death of man. Numb. xvi. 29.

The people spake against God and Moses. Numb. xxi. 5, 6.

There died in the plague 24,000. Numb. xxv. 9.

Eat flesh whenever thy soul lusteth. Deut. xii. 20.

Thou shalt not covenant with them. Deut. vii. 2.

You have seen all that the Lord did. Deut. xxix. 2.

Jacob bought the field of Hamor. Josh. xxiv. 32.

A witch raiseth Samuel. 1 Sam. xxviii. 11.

Michal had no child. 2 Sam. vi. 23.

God moved David to number. 2 Sam. xxiv. I.

David had rest from all his enemies. 2 Sam. vii. 1, 11.

Go, revenge Midian. Numb. xxxi. 2.

As one die, so die all. Eccles. iii. 19.

They tempted Christ. 1 Cor. x. 9.

There fell but 23,000. 2 Cor. x. 9.

It is not good for a man to eat flesh. Rom. xiv. 21.

David did. 1 Kings xv. 19.

You have not seen it to this day. Deut. xxix. 4.

Abraham bought it of Hamor. Acts vii. 16.

God only raises the dead. Rom. iv. 17.

The five sons of Michal. 2 Sam. xxi. 8.

Satan moved him. 1 Chron. xxi. 1.

After that David smote the Philistines. 2 Sam. viii. 1, 10.

To be continued.

Creation of the World.—The following curious tradition is extracted from *M^r Kenney's Tour to the Lakes*. It was related to Mr. M^r Kenney by O-she-we-gyun, an Indian chief, on being asked who made the world? Nanibojou and two wolves went out hunting. After the first day's hunt, one of the wolves parted, and went to the left, and the other continued with Nanibojou, who adopted him for his son. Nanibojou, knowing that there were devils in the lake, he and his son went to war with them, and destroyed all the devils that lived in one lake, then pursued their way hunting, but every deer the wolf would start and give chase to would run into another of the lakes. One day the wolf chased a deer. It ran upon the ice in the lake; the wolf pursued it—the ice broke in at the moment when the wolf caught the deer, and both fell in. The devils caught both and devoured them. Then Nanibojou went up and down the lake shore crying, when a loon, in the lake, heard Nanibojou crying, and called to him to know what he was crying about. Nanibojou answered, that he had just lost his son in the lake, and the loon replied, the devils have eaten him; and if he wanted to see the devils, he might, by going to a certain place, as the devils would come out there to sun themselves. Nanibojou went accordingly, and saw devils in all manner of forms; in the form of snakes, bears, and other things; and when the two head devils got out on the bank, they saw something of uncommon appearance, and which they had not seen before, and halting, they sent a very large devil in the form of a snake to see what this strange sight

was, Nanibojou, seeing the devil coming, assumed the appearance of a stump. The devil coming up, wrapped himself round it, and drew upon it with all his strength, and squeezed so hard that Nanibojou was on the point of crying out when the devil uncoiled himself a little, and then wound round him again, and drew, if possible, harder than before; and so severe did Nanibojou feel the pressure to be, that he was just about crying out, when the devil relaxed his hold, returned to his companions, and told them it was nothing but a stump. But the devils were not satisfied; so they sent another in the shape of a bear, to try what he could make of it. The bear came up to Nanibojou, and hugged him, and bit him, and clawed him—and so severe was the bear on him, that he was, as before, on the point of crying out when the bear relaxed his hold and returned and told the devils it was nothing but a stump. Whereupon the devils all went to sleep in the sun, when Nanibojou shot the two great devils. When the rest of the devils awoke and found their principals killed, they all pursued Nanibojou with a great flood of water. Nanibojou hearing it coming fled before it, and ran from hill to hill until he got to the top of the highest mountain, and there climbed the highest pine tree that he could see. But the waters followed him to the top of this tree, when he prayed that the tree might grow. It did grow, but the waters rose still higher. He prayed again, being almost covered with water, it being now up to his chin. He prayed a third time, but the tree grew only a little. Then looking round him upon the waters, he saw a number of animals swimming in different directions, and amongst them a beaver, an otter, and a muskrat. He called them to him, and said we must have some earth or we shall all die. They came—the beaver went first after some earth, by diving into the waters, but drowned before he reached the bottom. Next the otter went down—he got within sight of land, but lost his senses before he got a bite of it. Then the muskrat went down and got to the bottom, and just as he got a bite of it he lost his senses, and floated up to the top of the water. Nanibojou examined all their claws, beginning with the beaver, but only found earth in those of the muskrat. He took it in his hand, rubbed it, held it out to the sun until it dried, then blew it over the water, and dry land appeared! He was asked who made the earth the muskrat found? He said “he did not know.” “That he knew nothing beyond the time that Nanibojou made the earth.” “That Nanibojou lived somewhere towards the rising sun; was like a man in his appearance; had been married, but had no wife of late; was a twin, born of a woman who never had a husband, and who vanished at the birth of Nanibojou and his twin brother, neither of whom have been seen since.”

Peter the Cruel.—A prebendary of the cathedral was, in the early part of Peter's reign, trying to seduce a beautiful woman, the wife of a mechanic. The frequency of the lover's visits roused the jealousy of the husband, and he desired the clergyman to desist from troubling the peace of his household. The prebendary, incensed at what he conceived to be an insult, waylaid and killed the man. He then took sanctuary in the cathedral, and was soon after set free by the archbishop, under a very slight punishment. A son of the murdered man, who, though young and

poor, possessed a high spirit, appeared before the king, in an open space, with seats built of stone, near one of the gates of the palace, where he used daily to hear the complaints and petitions of his subjects. The structure I allude to was pulled down so lately as the middle of the seventeenth century. The orphan youth complained bitterly of the archbishop, who had allowed the murderer of his father to go unpunished. Peter heard the lad with great attention, and, taking him aside, asked him if he felt encouraged to avenge his father? The lad declared he wished for nothing so ardently. "Go, then, (said the king,) and come to me for protection." The heart blood of the murderer dripped soon after from the orphan's dagger. He was hotly pursued to the palace, where, being given in charge to the crossbowmen, a day was appointed for the trial. Peter, in open court, heard the archbishop's counsel against the prisoner, and asked the sentence of the ecclesiastical judge against the prebendary. "He was, please your highness, (answered the prosecutor,) suspended a whole year from his office." "What is your trade or occupation, young man?" said the king. "I am a shoemaker," was the answer. "Then let it be recorded as the sentence of this court, that, for the space of a whole year, the prisoner shall not be allowed to make shoes."

TO OUR PATRONS.

As the second volume, which will complete the first year of the *Correspondent*, is drawing to a close, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) *in advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months *in advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if *city* subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year *at our office*, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Chris-

tianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

Almanac.—The Editor of the *Correspondent* is now preparing for the press an *Almanac* modelled on rational principles, and entirely divested of those puerilities and absurdities which characterize every work of that description now in circulation. It will contain all useful and necessary calculations, and such other matters as may have a tendency to enlarge, not to paralyze, the human mind. The retail price will be 6 1-4 cents; but to those who take 25 copies for distribution, a discount of 25 per cent. will be given. Such as are disposed to encourage this undertaking are requested to give notice as soon as possible of the number of copies they may require, as it is intended to put this work to press early in December. Any communication calculated to render this *Almanac* useful or interesting, may be left at No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library.

Music.—The Musical Department of the *Free Press Association* meets on Sunday (tomorrow) the 9th instant, at half past 10 o'clock forenoon, in the Temple of Arts, William street.

It has been recommended by the Committee of Management, and the recommendation approved of by the General Meeting, that the members of the Association should attend the musical meetings themselves, in order to acquire a correct knowledge of the first principles of music, and bring their children along with them, to be initiated in this delightful science.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

Paine's Theological Works, complete, 8vo., bound and gilt—\$2; bds. \$1.50.

Paine's Age of Reason, parts I. and II., a new pocket edition, bound and gilt—37 1-2 cents. * * A liberal discount will be given to those who purchase a quantity of the *Age of Reason*.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

Mr. Editor—It appears by the newspapers, that, at a recent trial for ejectment, at Providence, Rhode Island, the testimony of two witnesses was rejected on the ground of their disbelief in a future state of rewards and punishments. One of them is said to have received his disbelief from Paine's *Age of Reason*. How a disbelief in a future state could be obtained from Mr. Paine's works, I am at a loss to conceive, as Mr. Paine believed in the affirmative.

On a late trial in England, a bookseller charged a man with stealing books out of his store. The defendant's counsel asked the plaintiff if he believed in a future state of rewards and punishments. He answered in the negative; but that nevertheless he considered himself bound to tell the truth. The counsel said, we cannot admit your evidence. The judge then asked him if he believed Jesus Christ to be the son of God. The plaintiff answered, no: Then, said the judge, we must reject your evidence. So the thief would have been set at liberty had it depended on the plaintiff's testimony. The plaintiff lost his property, and an encouragement was afforded to rob him again, because he did not believe in future punishments, and Jesus Christ to be the son of God! It is not my intention to go into history to show the origin of future punishments; nor how many nations have entertained that belief; but I will attempt to show the absurdity, the cruelty, and the injurious effects of it.

It would appear from the language of Christians, that a man can believe as he pleases; that he can conform to any system of faith. But ask a methodist if he can believe in the doctrine of *election* and *reprobation*? Ask a protestant if he can believe in *transubstantiation*, in *purgatory*, and in the *vicegerency of the pope*? And ask a Christian if he can believe in the *Koran*, and that Mahomet was a *prophet of God*? They will all undoubtedly and emphatically answer, *no*. We believe agreeably to the impressions made upon us by education, reading, observation, conversation, &c. If I change my belief, it will arise from what I deem stronger evidence than that which I possess, and not from my will: if my will has any thing to do in the matter, it arises from the evidence to which it conforms.

If a belief in a future state is the only or the principal criterion, why do we employ so many men, who are occupied several months in a year making, altering, and amending numerous laws to compel men to be honest; and yet, after all, what a mass of evil exists in Christian communities. Look at the bargains, intrigues, and corruptions of those in power,

from the highest in office to the most subordinate clerk ; and at the war, oppression, and tyranny of statesmen. The men who commit these evils are those who manifest an ardent attachment to Bible and missionary societies. These are the men who persecute and punish all who think that morality is superior to faith, and virtuous actions most pleasing to God. The fact is, a man who believes in future punishments may gamble, drink, defraud, and oppress, and his testimony be admitted in a court of judicature ; while a man who *cannot* believe in future punishment, yet is honest and virtuous, must not have justice and the benefit of the law.

But Christians are inconsistent, or they consider each other as incapable of telling the truth, except when kissing the Bible ; for when one of them comes into a court of justice, however well known his faith may be, he is not only compelled to swear what he asserts is true, but he is examined and cross examined. The judges, jury, and counsel observe if there is any change in his countenance, tone, manner, &c., to detect him in a falsehood. Why do this with one who believes in future punishment ? The anti-future punishment men might show sufficient objections against the doctrine from the want of unanimity of their opponents, not only in the mode of punishment, but in the extension of it. But future punishments do not deter men in the commission of crimes. It is good laws, education, public opinion, vigilance in others, &c. that make men virtuous. As an instance of the truth of what I assert, I will suppose a case : A man goes into a store, having an imperfect knowledge of the value of the goods which he wishes to purchase. Will not the storekeeper (I speak in general terms, as it is highly probable there are honest storekeepers) take advantage of the man's ignorance, and charge him more than one who knows the value of the goods ? Every experienced man will answer, yes. In this case *future punishments*, and not the law, is concerned. But this storekeeper dare not put his hand into the man's pocket and take out even a cent, because this would subject him to the punishment of the *law*.

The cruelty of future punishments, as laid down in the Bible and by its commentators, forms an insuperable objection to every man who considers the subject rationally. We are told by one party that it consists in a guilty conscience ; which pain is described as unbearable : "a wounded conscience who can bear?" Our consciences are not equally affected at the commission of the same act. One man feels very little remorse in the commission of a great crime ; while another of weak nerves is easily affected at committing a trifling fault. Another party believes that the soul will burn without end in fire and brimstone, unless we *repent* and believe Jesus Christ was the *son of God* ! An idea naturally occurs, how the human mind could believe in a punishment so improbable, so cruel in its nature, and so extensive in its duration : but, alas ! the human mind is as capable of receiving erroneous impressions as correct ones, and interested and ignorant men have created a system of terror ; the former to live on the labor of others, and the latter from an idea that the human race cannot be virtuous without being educated in *fear*. Hence the idea of future punishments ; and hence the zeal and anxiety of Christians to enforce this erroneous belief in all their schools. The

god of the Jews and Christians is represented in the Bible as one "whose tender mercies are over all his works;" but I am at a loss to know how he is merciful, when he consigns his children for a trifling and finite fault to endless flames, and when the devil, who tempts and draws them into evil, has the pleasure of punishing them for it. If man is weak, why permit the devil, who commenced evil, and that, too, in heaven, to tempt him? If he is not weak, not prone to evil, why make him so? Why produce evil from good? I know it will be said that temptation is necessary to make trial of man, and that this life is probationary. If God knows all things, does he not know what man will do? And would it not be better that he should not be tempted, seeing that "many go in at the broad gate, which leadeth unto destruction; while few go in at the straight one which leadeth unto life eternal?"

By the Bible we are led to conclude that God is unfeeling; a being without pity and without mercy. See the parable of the rich man in hell, Luke 16—24, 25. Suppose a man in civilized life lay certain injunctions on his son, that if he does not observe them he shall be afflicted with terrible punishments; and suppose this son, from his weakness, cannot fulfil these injunctions, and the father commences the infliction of this terrible punishment; the child, with all its feelings and tenderness, entreats him as a father, as a being who knows its weakness, and the severity of the punishment, to release him: would that father be so unfeeling, so obdurate, and so destitute of affection [I appeal to every man who is a father] as not to forgive him? I answer, *no*. If man, then, would not be so destitute of feeling, how can we expect the father of the human race would, whose love and mercy are so far superior to those of man? Perhaps some Christian will ask, "Why, then, did Junius Brutus condemn his own son?" The obvious answer is, because he had violated the laws, in conspiring against the liberties of his country. The judge acted agreeably to law, because he was *under* it. But suppose he had had the power and had pardoned his son, what would have been the consequence? Every ambitious and daring innovator on the liberties of his country might urge the case of young Brutus as his own, and that, too, with justice. This would lead to the destruction of freedom and peace in every country; anarchy, disorder, and bloodshed in every state.

But what evil will arise from man *not* being punished in a future state? It cannot injure God; it cannot injure the human race; it can injure nothing; but, on the contrary, it will produce much good. To punish must be the offspring of revenge. If a man has committed a crime, he is punished for two reasons; first, that it may have a salutary influence on his future conduct; and, second, sometimes, that it may serve as an example to others, though the latter is unjust. If this life is a state of trial, when a man dies he has past it; consequently, punishment after death cannot have any influence on his actions, nor can it serve as an example to others, for I apprehend no one will say there are *two* states of trial. Had God not deemed the punishment we receive through life sufficient, he, in order to deter us from committing evil, ought (if he had *not the power* to do otherwise) to have punished us severely *previous* to our committing evil. This might have had the desired effect, though it would have been a strange kind of justice. Future punishments are in-

jurious to the best interests of society; they have caused millions to be the easy dupes of impostors, who have been and are considered as "a sort of turnpike gate to heaven;" for I seldom or never knew a man or woman, who were on good terms with their priest, who did not consider their soul in a good state. These men have extorted confessions from ignorant persons; dived into the private affairs of families; but, what is most to be lamented, they have obtained the ascendancy over statesmen and rulers, and induced them to enter into religious wars, crusades, massacres, &c., of which history furnishes a melancholy catalogue. Had it not been for future punishments, they never could have obtained the ascendancy.

Future punishments are unjust, because they do not agree either in duration or nature with the offence. What proportion can infinity bear to what is finite? and what proportion do our vices and follies bear to endless torments? To burn a child for stealing a cent's worth of ginger cake would be mercy compared to it! because our senses and our faculties sometimes deceive us. How many actions of a man's life can be called exclusively his own? that is, that are not influenced, directly or indirectly, by his fellow beings. A dense society is like one vast chain, and each individual a link in that chain.

"From Nature's chain, whatever link you strike,
Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike."

Man should have been created capable of *distinguishing* good from evil in all the circumstances of his life. His nature should have been free from any *inclination* to vice and folly; and he should have been capable of *resisting* evil in whatever form it presented itself. So that if he had sinned after being thus created, his punishment should be in proportion to his crimes, and thus deter him from committing injuries and make compensation for those already committed.

In conclusion, whatever influence future punishments might have on the minds of its believers, it lessens its effects by the doctrine of forgiveness of sins. A whole life is frequently spent in vice and injustice, and then, when sickness comes, that death is likely to ensue, "repent and be baptized," "repent and believe, and thou shalt be saved," and "though your sins be as scarlet they shall be made as white as snow," come into the mind and give it relief; and this doctrine of the forgiveness of sins frequently eases the consciences of those few (if there are any) who believe in and would be deterred by future punishments. Thus I have attempted to show the absurdity, the injustice, the cruelty, and the injurious effects of future punishments. In whatever way this article will be received by you and your readers I cannot conceive. The opinions contained in it are my own. How far they are correct I leave to others. I should like to see an article on this subject from the pen of "*Phil Veritas*."

Philadelphia, December 4, 1827.

JULIAN.

THE REV. MR. SHULTZ.

Sir—This gentleman, it appears, has come forth with what he doubtless considers a successful defence against the charge of obscurity and

inconsistency in some of his former writings, as published in the *Correspondent*. I assure him, with much sincerity, that I am truly sorry he has made an abortive attempt; it is, in fact, a truly *Christian* defence, nothing but a mass of quibble and subterfuge. Where, except in the vocabulary, or at least the practice, of *priests*, (the abomination of Mr. Shultz,) shall we be able to find the difference between *actual* and *historical* facts? He parades before us a long, imposing string of what he terms *facts*, and when it is shown that these same *facts* contradict each other, in conformity with the practice of his brethren Christian priests, commentators, and translators, he discovers a different meaning to the word, shrinks from his position, and tells us—what? why, that facts are not—facts. A most logical and *satisfactory* demonstration, to be sure! As to the work which he styles his “Triumph of Truth,” I have not seen it; nor, from this last display of his reasoning, do I expect any advantage, any approximation towards truth, the great object in view, would be obtained by its perusal. A word or two respecting the new title, *priest*, with which I am dubbed: on this head I must say,

“You have an aspect, sir, of monstrous wisdom.”

I am persuaded that no one who looked over the few remarks which have produced Mr. Shultz’s animadversions considered me to be a *priest*, save that *reverend* gentleman himself. But, as *priests* and *priestcraft* seem to be his “tormenting fiends,” his right to be justified in the mistake is fully equal to Don Quixotte’s when he attacked the windmill, supposing it to be a castle and the abode of giants. To enlighten his obscure vision on this point, I will tell him distinctly that am *not* a priest; that I am not a Christian, (as he *appears* to be,) and that his “simple system of religion,” of which he speaks, is to my view most complex, absurd, and unsusceptible of proof, richly entitling him to the appellation of priest and priest-ridden. I also, it is true, believe in a god. But what is that god? By no means the god of whom Moses tells us such marvellous tales. What are his attributes? How does he make known to us his existence? What influence—what interference does he have with or upon us? Here, Mr. Schultz, is the grand question: this is the important point to decide at the outset; and, as you have been the first to publish your creed, I leave to you the honor and glory of first describing the god in whom you profess a belief. In doing this I hope you will speak plain English: let us have no Christianity or priestianity: assert nothing which cannot reasonably be inferred, or which you can neither prove nor any other person understand. If you execute this task to my satisfaction, or that of any other such priest as I am, then will I subscribe a willing belief in all your facts, whether *actual* or *historical*.

I am charged with misquoting the language used in one of Mr. Shultz’s *facts*. We may consider this an honorable, at least a very convenient, way of surmounting the difficulty which presented itself; but it is certainly one which cannot avail; and I repeat my expression of regret that he should resort to such shuffling expedients, so much in the style and manner of the *veracious* and *learned* conductors of the *Anti-dote*. I shall not occupy the space required for transcribing the passage, but I assert that I have *not* misquoted his assumed fact, No. 171.

After the denial by Mr. Shultz of his belief in the authenticity of the Old and New Testaments, in vain do I look around for even the shadow of an excuse in his behalf, when he introduces in his last communication such passages as the following: "all the Jews and Christians admit that Adam and Eve were the first pair of mortals;" "and so with all the other patriarchs, including Moses and the Jews:" "if we admit, *as is generally the case*, that we are all the offspring of one pair of mortals;" "if the first pair were created in infancy;" "if, therefore, the first pair were created in manhood, *as is generally believed*," &c. &c. Here we have enough in all conscience to convince us that the writer places implicit confidence in the Mosaic fables, and to justify me in repeating the question of the "old lady," "Which side is he fighting for?" It is true, he speaks hypothetically, (as indeed he does throughout the greater part of the article,) but it is evident he advances these propositions as being in accordance with his own opinion, and assumes them as data for the conclusions he wishes to establish. Of course, I pretend not to dictate to any man what belief he should hold on these points; but I think it is any or every man's right, if he choose to exercise it—the pointing out such bold, unblushing; and uncalled for inconsistency. In conclusion, I take the liberty of advising Mr. Shultz to seek for refuge in the "sinner receiving" and "soul saving" doctrines of methodism, where he will have a glorious opportunity of proclaiming his unshaken faith in a future state of rewards and punishments; *alias* taking a warm bath in a lake of fire and brimstone, or singing hallelujahs to all eternity.

I am, sir, yours,

S.

New York, Dec. 5, 1827.

THE FANATIC AND THE LIBERAL.

"You are an infidel, and ought to be hanged—you are odious to God and man"—said a pious believer in the redemption of the world from the sin of Eve's having eaten an apple,—"fair to the sight and pleasant to behold," which God hath placed within her reach.

"How do you know that?" returned the liberal. "O! you don't profess *our* religion," said the first, "and *therefore* you are wrong."

"But *what* is your religion?—How do you *prove* it? Are any two of yourselves *agreed about it*? Who told you that *you* were *right* and *all others wrong*? And, supposing that you can satisfactorily answer those questions, who gave you leave to 'hang' me, *because* I am a liberal? Answer this, and I'll tell you why I don't support your God"—rejoined the other.

"*Our* religion has been professed too long to need any proof *now*; and as for the question from whom I received permission to hang you, I reply that *our* religion is established by law," returned the fanatic.

"The first part of your answer is singular enough," replied the philosopher; "I have yet to learn that *time* sanctifies *crime*, and that the circumstance of your juggle having existed for two thousand years is any authority in its favor, or any reason why we should not now inquire into its origin. The same might be said with equal propriety of extortion, rapine, war, murder; in short, of every evil which oppresses and

makes men miserable. What signifies it that a falsehood has existed for 'a thousand long years;' is it *less* falsehood on that account? Does it *change its nature with age*, and become true now, though it was not true *at its first promulgation*? You say that *your religion* has 'existed so long that it stands in need of no proof now;'—I inquire, was it ever proved? Can any other reason for its continuance be given, than the ignorant taking for granted the prejudice of men? If this prejudice were once removed, you would soon find yourselves obliged to adduce proof, notwithstanding the 'long time' during which your juggle has 'existed.' The second branch of your replication may be very soon disposed of: your religion certainly is *now* the prevailing, and you persecute accordingly; the catholic superstition was *once* the 'state religion'—and they did the same! A few years may see your idol again upset, and the 'obscene astaroth' of your catholic opponents once more uppermost. Their plea of 'established by law' will *then* be as reasonable and as much entitled to respect as *yours* is *now*. Would you admit paganism, if it were 'established by law?' If you say *yes*, then I say you are influenced solely by prejudice, and not by reason: if *no*, then why should I receive yours? Why would you not subscribe to paganism? Because you don't think it fitting so to do. Why don't I agree to *your* creed? Because I don't think it proper."

Fanatic:—"Ah! it is all mighty fine talking—but you'll never convince me."

Friend of truth:—"I am obliged to you for this *admission*, and need nothing further to assure me that your religion is founded on 'falsehood which cannot brook inquiry.' *Why* shall I 'never convince you?' *Why*, because you feel that the juggle which you support won't admit of argument; and that you cannot 'give a reason for the hope that is in you.' I did not expect you to argue thus long with me—for seldom, indeed, is it that *we* can get a fair hearing; and I feel proportionably indebted to you for the patient attention which you have paid to me. I was, of course, aware from the first that you listened, determined in reason's spite to be 'of the same opinion' still.' Perhaps at some future time you will afford me a hearing on the question whether *religion, without morality*, or *morality, without religion*, is best calculated to make men good and useful, as citizens, fathers, and friends?"

"It is clear that a man without religion cannot be a moral man," was the answer.

"*How* is it 'clear?' Have you a shadow of argument to support this assertion? Can you produce me the names of ten clergymen, from out of the numerous body which your religion has generated, of more exemplary moral conduct than *any* ten of our leading sceptics? However, we shall meet again in a few days, when I will recur to the subject. In the mean time, ponder on what I have said, and do not let your prejudice determine you '*never to be convinced*.'"

Sacrifice.—Any thing which is offered up to heaven, by way of staying the rage of the Deity against sinners; "and the same lamb which was offered up to appease the appetite of the hungry priest."—*Pigott*.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE TENTH.

[The following lecture should have preceded the one concluded in our last, on the deluge. It was delivered immediately before it, but accidentally misplaced.]

Proceeding in our examination of the Old Testament, we find the following narrative in the beginning of the 5th chapter of Genesis. "This is the book of the *generations of Adam*. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God created he him. Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day they were created. And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years and begat a son, in his own likeness, and after his own image, and called his name *Seth*."

No one who reads this passage can suppose that Adam had children before the birth of Seth. The chapter begins with what is termed the *creation of Adam*, and calls itself the book of the *generations of Adam*; yet no mention is made in it of such persons as Cain or Abel. According to this account, *Seth* was the *first* born of Adam. But if we are to believe what is said at the close of the 4th chapter, (ver. 25,) he was the *third* child that Eve brought him. "And Adam knew his wife again, and she bare a son and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." One or other of these accounts must be false; but how is this to be decided? For my part, I consider them both false, and in that opinion I am supported by the well known rule of evidence, that the contradictory testimony of two witnesses, where they both speak of the same occurrences, weakens, if not altogether destroys, the credibility of both.

One thing, at all events, is clearly proved by these conflicting statements; namely, that the person who wrote the first four chapters of Genesis could not be the same who wrote the 5th chapter. The most blundering historian could not have committed himself in such a manner. I have, indeed, already shown, that incontrovertible historical facts exist, which demonstrate that the first four chapters of Genesis did not originally belong to that book, but were prefixed to it several years after Christianity was introduced. Though I consider the whole of the Jewish books fictitious, it was to be expected, at least, that a fiction *historically* told would have been consistent; whereas none of the chapters on which I have remarked have any claim to consistency. Yet we are gravely assured that they were inspired by an infinitely wise and perfectly consistent deity!

In the subsequent parts of the 5th chapter of Genesis, we have an account of nine persons whose ages far surpass the ordinary life of man in modern times. Supernatural theology (observes Palmer) delights in the marvellous; it seeks to plunge the human mind into the depth of difficulties, and surround it with inextricable mysteries. Six of the persons

named in this chapter are said to have lived each of them more than 900 years—an incredible protraction of human life; and, unless it had been supported by irrefutable testimony, or by evidence bearing some analogy to the laws and facts of the physical world, it is unworthy the serious belief of any one pretending to rationality. It is true, that the life of man may vary in many respects in different ages and countries, and its duration may partake visibly of this variation; but not to the extent mentioned in this chapter. Climate, modes of living, and many other circumstances may contribute to extend or shorten the period of human existence. This is a fact within our own observation. In Sweden, a high and healthy country, the inhabitants are said to be remarkable for longevity. It is not uncommon in that country to see ten persons together, whose ages, united, amount to 1000 years—a great age, compared with the life of man in the tropical regions. But, after all, these venerable Swedes are mere children when set off against the Methusalahs of antiquity. There is a vast difference between 100 years and 960; so great a difference, that if the one be supported by substantial proof, the other carries on its face the marks of fraud or of fiction.

But religious fanaticism is a kind of immoral phantom, that claims the right of telling lies for the “glory of God,” and for the advancement of its nefarious and detestable purposes. Luxury and intemperance, in civilized countries, have, undoubtedly, in many instances, contributed to shorten the duration of human life; while want, inclemency, famine, and an unprotected condition have left the savage in a state not more favorable to the protraction of his existence. When we survey, however, the history of man, his organization, his physical and moral being, the nature of climates, and the facts furnished by constant experience relative to the duration of human life, we are compelled to pronounce this account of marvellous longevity to be an extravagant fiction of antiquity, inconsistent with the laws and ordinary operations of Nature.

Some have had recourse to vegetable diet to explain the difficulty. But this, even were it true, would not answer the purpose; for we know individuals, and even parts of nations, who live wholly on vegetable food, and yet no such extraordinary effect is produced. Besides, it is not true that they lived on vegetables at that period of the world; for we are told that Nimrod was a “mighty hunter before the Lord,” and the whole history of the Jews proves that they dealt much in the blood of beasts as well as the blood of men. Savage nations are always carnivorous; and such was the case as to God’s chosen people. The state of knowledge among them was at the lowest ebb, and their celestial illuminations gave them no preeminence over the rest of mankind. If any man ever lived 900 years, it must have been a miracle. But this is inconsistent with the perfections attributed to deity; makes him at war with his own arrangements, and subverts the immutable laws by which the world is governed.

In the beginning of the 6th chapter of Genesis, it is said “And it came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.” Various have been the surmises and calculations on the rapid multiplication of the human species from the first man and woman

To account for this, some have maintained that in the first age of the world females were constantly in the habit of having two or three children at a birth. Epiphanius says, that Adam and Eve had twelve sons, and two daughters named Sava and Azura; the former of whom was the wife of Cain, and the latter of Seth. Philo Annianus, on the other hand, asserts that they had thirteen sons, and five daughters whose names he also places on record. Cedrenus affirms that Adam left thirty-three sons and twenty-seven daughters, but he does not give their names. If, however, as is said in the Bible, Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years, and Eve about the same time, it is not to be doubted that, in the course of so long a life, they had a much greater number of children of both sexes. According to Cedrenus, who, doubtless, acquired the information by particular revelation, Eve weaned her children when they were twelve years old. She also had twins, male and female, annually: consequently in the thirteenth year of the world she had twenty-four children—twelve males and twelve females, to all of whom it is certain, says this same writer, she gave suck. But how could a single mother provide for nearly two dozen babes at the same time, and with her own milk alone? But why do we ask so impertinent a question? Is not every thing possible with God? Are there not numerous mysteries, miracles, and facts in the Bible, and out of it, as incomprehensible as this, which the Christians nevertheless firmly believe to be true? With them, indeed, the greatness of a mystery, and the impossibility of a fact, are the best reasons in the world for crediting them.

In v. 4, it is said "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also, after that when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were, of old, men of renown." Here we have three different kinds of characters: the sons of God, the daughters of men, and giants. But who were these sons of God? Were they a celestial race of beings, of an extraordinary size, sent from the upper regions for the purpose of paying their respects to the female beauties of this terrestrial world? Or were they of earthly origin, belonging to the other race of beings among whom Cain got a wife and built a city? Were they particular favorites of the Most High? After they had taken to themselves wives of the daughters of men, was it this union that led to the production of giants? Or did these giants spring from another source? On all these points we are left in a state of total darkness, although we are told that the narrative was dictated by God for the express purpose of throwing light on these subjects. It is, indeed, evident from the manner in which the whole story is put together, that it is the work of one who possessed neither the spirit of God nor the spirit of common sense to guide him in his labors.

The fiction of the existence of a race of giants was evidently, like that of the angels, introduced into the Jewish books from the orientals, who personified every thing in Nature. Dew and gentle rain they called *Pandrosa* and *Erse*, names indicating mildness and refreshing. Sudden torrents, great waters, and dreadful clouds were designated by more terrific names; they were called *giants* from their destructive property. We read of the giant Briareus, with a hundred arms; of whom it is affirmed that he warred against the gods; that he endeavored to overturn

their thrones by throwing up rocks and mountains, and that he threw a whole island at Jupiter, but that god with "much ado" overpowered the terrible monster, who was the true type of Milton's hero. It is said that this giant was the son of *Ether*, a name which implies to subvert or overturn—a disturber of repose. The child that answers all these descriptions is no other than a *whirlwind*. The name given to the giant Porphyryon meant an *earthquake*; that of Othius, whose father's name was Aello; that is, a *storm*, from which the Greeks made Eolus, the god of *blustering winds*. "These (observes Mackay) were what the ancients used to term the symbols or representations of the storms, or ravages of the elements, with which the inhabitants of the earth were buffeted, when the pole of the earth was in or near the ecliptic. The Jews hearing these things repeated in the triennial festivals of the pagans, did not know why they might not also introduce a few giants into their history."

To be continued.

The Nature of Oaths, and giving Testimony in a Court of Justice.—

An action of trover was brought in the marine court, before judge Scott, on the 29th ult. On behalf of the plaintiff a gentleman, a member of the New York *Free Press Association*, was produced to give testimony; but was objected to by the counsel for the defendant, on the grounds that he did not believe in a god, nor in a future state of rewards and punishments.

The honorable and learned judge interfered, and questioned the legal propriety of interrogating the witness on matters appertaining to any particular creed or religious belief. In support of this opinion, he quoted several eminent law authorities, and late decisions regarding the admission of evidence from witnesses who might entertain opinions probably similar to those of the present witness; and observed that the law went even so far as to state that those termed *infidels*, whose veracity could not be impeached, and who held to the solemn obligation and inviolability of an oath, were clearly admissible as evidence.

The counsel for the defendant again urged that, notwithstanding these authorities, they could not see how they applied to the present witness; for they were ready to produce evidence that this gentleman's philosophy taught him to deny the existence of a god altogether, and also a future state of rewards and punishments; and that he had in an especial and public manner avowed his entire disbelief in the god of Moses.

The counsel for the plaintiff here argued on the various points in the law authorities, and decisions quoted by the learned judge, and respecting the undoubted veracity of the witness, whose *affirmation* ought and must be admitted as sufficient testimony in this cause, or any cause whatever.

The counsel for the defendant frankly admitted the veracity of the witness; and stated that, from what they knew of the gentleman, they would as soon take his simple affirmation as the oath of any one. They expressed no further interest in the question than being pressed to urge the objections by their client.

From some suggestions thrown out by the court, at the instigation of the counsel, the witness was permitted to state his opinions of a god, and

a future state of rewards and punishments. He believed, he said, in a great, powerful, and immutable ruling principle inherent in the whole of Nature, which might be said to govern the universe. He cared not, neither did he consider it of any importance, whether this spirit, or principle, was dénominated God, or by any other appellation. As to his opinion of a future state of rewards and punishments, he considered this a subject of so abstruse and complicated a nature that it might tend to a high philosophical discussion; which, perhaps, would not be in accordance with the proceedings of this or any other court of justice. Regarding the solemn obligation of an oath, he had no hesitation to say that a false oath, or affirmation, being an evil act, would carry with it or produce its own punishment, as virtue has its own reward; and this punishment might be said to be during the present or any future state of existence. He expressed his inclination to go no farther; when the court asked him if he had scruples to swear upon the Bible? To this he replied that he had. His affirmation was accordingly taken, as *legal testimony* in the cause.

MISCELLANEOUS.

State of the Jews.—The Jews have been singularly unfortunate. They shared the oppression and contumely which the Christian sects underwent, as soon as the jealousy of the pagan priests and emperors was excited by the progress of their monotheism; but they in no degree partook of the security or triumphs conquered for the church by Constantine. Their incredulity was considered by orthodox and heretics as of all others the most criminal, nor was it till after the Mahometan conquests that they obtained, in part of Asia, along the southern shores of the Mediterranean and in Spain, a resting place for their feet.

In modern Italy, the earliest haunt of reviving literature and philosophy, the first attempts were made to prepare the European mind for the toleration of Judaism. Simone Lazzurati, of Venice, is mentioned as a pleader of their cause. The friends of the Socini were thought to entertain sentiments very favorable to the Jews; but the interference of the inquisition, in 1546, to suppress the celebrated club of Vincenza, an event preparatory to the exile and dispersion of all the rational Christians of Italy, defrauded them of raising advocates. In the several Italian republics, the Jews enjoyed only a contemptuous protection. Their fate was somewhat more favorable in Poland, and much more favorable in Holland, where Basnage, and, no doubt, others, wrote of them becomingly.

In Germany, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, a celebrated dramatist, by his philosophical plays, Nathan the Wise, and Monk of Lebanon, attacked the prejudice against Judaism in its fortress, the public mind; while his friend, Moses Mendelsohn, was illustrating the sect, both by his elegant writings and by a well argued defence of general toleration, published under the title of Jerusalem. C. W. Dohn, a Prussian, offered, in 1781, to the German public, two small volumes of Remarks on the Means of Improving the Civil Condition of the Jews, which called forth

several pamphlets on the same topic, among which those of Schlotzer and Michaelis, no doubt, deserve consultations.

In France, the prejudices of Voltaire against the Jewish religion proved a powerful obstacle to the advances of the philosophic party, in an equitable disposition towards its professors. In 1788, however, the academy of Metz proposed as a prize question, Are there means of rendering the Jews in France usefuller and happier? Zalkind Hourwitz, a Polish Jew, M. Thierry, a counsellor of Nanci, and the Abbe Gregoire, shared the prize, but not the public suffrage. The work of the latter, on the moral, physical, and political regeneration of the Jews, has obtained the more impressive publicity. Among his most distinguished coadjutors in obtaining a legal improvement of their condition, the constitutional assembly of France numbered Mirabeau, Clermont-tonnerre, and Rabaud.

In Great Britain, the well intended conduct of the government, under the protectorate of Cromwell, and under the administration of Pelham, were alike defeated by the fanaticism of the people. Mr. Toland's Naturalization of the Jews in England, is the best antidote of elder date that has descended to us. Tovey and Ockley have also stored up information on these topics.

Of late, Priestly's Letters to the Jews, a work, which, probably, under the mask of pursuing their conversion, had for its object to do away the ungrateful prejudices of religionists against their parent sect, has rendered to them, in the devout world, the same service as Cumberland's Comedy of the Jew in the polished. There can scarcely remain any apprehension among thinking men, that the slightest popular odium would now be incurred by any legislature, if it repealed every law which encroaches upon the political equality of this and other sects.

Sunday in England.—It has been pretty generally alleged by foreigners, that an English Sunday is remarkably *triste*; and that it is a day on which every thing in the shape of amusement is rigorously proscribed. From the manner in which they speak of it, it might naturally be imagined that it was kept with the strictness of the Jewish Sabbath;—and that all secular thoughts and feelings were suspended on this day. It is true, their theatres and concert rooms are shut, but they make themselves ample amends for this sacrifice, their practical rigor being by no means so great as has been imputed to them. The most conscientious mussulman will not refuse to take wine, should some kind interpreter of his wishes silence his scruples, by assuring him that the prohibited beverage is coffee: so is it with John Bull: he has no objection to amusement and enjoyment on a Sunday, provided it be not in the walls of a theatre or opera house. A Turk might suppose, for instance, that the weekly promenade in Hyde Park was some ceremony connected with their public devotion—a religious procession instead of a vanity fair. Then, as has been observed, although John is shocked at the idea of dancing on Sundays, he sees no harm in skating. He perceives no impropriety in discussing politics, scandal, and fashions, in Kensington Gardens. The theatres, indeed, are shut, but the toll gates are open; he may, therefore, either travel or

make parties of pleasure just as he lists. John does not sing; but though there may be harm in a song, there can possibly be none in a newspaper—especially a *Sunday* newspaper. On the contrary, these publications must certainly be very edifying, else how would the most moral and religious people in the world tolerate—we will not say patronize them? But *appropos* of newspapers: we lately happened (says the London Literary Chronicle) to call one Sunday on a good lady, whom we found reprimanding her daughter for having dared to look into a ‘play book,’ which, on inspection, we found to be Dodsley’s *Toy Shop*, certainly not the most immoral production belonging to our stock of dramatic literature. On the table was a Sunday paper, which, on glancing over its contents, we found to contain some luscious extracts from Harriette Wilson’s *Memoirs*, a case of crim. con., an account of a boxing match, two or three indecent police reports, and not a few articles of scandalous gossip; and yet mamma, who was so incensed at her daughter’s indecorum, most unblushingly confessed that she had read the whole paper through;—on which we drily observed, that we supposed the young lady read the ‘play book’ by way of penance.

Dr. Watts.—The following are the circumstances of a situation, in which the late melodious doctor Watts was once found:—accustomed to visit his friends in the country, doctor Watts, some time in the summer of the year 1723, made a journey to the west of England; here he resided at the house of a lady of great piety and great distinction. Being then engaged in preparing some hymns, and part of his logical tracts, for the press, the doctor occasionally forgot the regular dining hour; this happened in particular on a day when the lady had invited some of her friends to spend part of the day in the doctor’s elevated company. Dinner being ready, and the doctor not yet out of his study, the lady sent her servant to announce the visitants to him, and to request at the same time, that he would be ‘so good as to come to dinner.’ The servant complying with his lady’s orders, went directly to the doctor’s study door, and, as was usual for him on such occasions, rapped gently; but no answer—rapped again, still no answer;—in short, he continued at this work so long, that the good old lady began to be uneasy; she sent to know the reason of the delay: the reason is, ‘the doctor has made no motion, nor made any reply since I have been at the door;’ the servant was hereupon commanded to force his way into the study—he does so—finds the doctor at his desk—tells him about dinner and the visitants; but instead of attending to his news, the doctor, so much was he absorbed in metaphysical speculations, could only tell him ‘I am metamorphosed: I am turned into a teapot: here,’ pointing to his arm, ‘is the handle,’ and taking his nose between his fingers, ‘here is the spout,’ and, if you do not take care, the water which shall proceed from me shall drown you.’ At these last words the servant grew impatient, and taking the doctor from his chair, laid him in his arms; but while he thus proceeded to carry him to the dining room, the dreaming doctor exclaimed, ‘I am grown too big—surely I cannot enter at the dining room door.’ Compared to this

religious revery, what are we to think of that recorded of the apostle Paul?

Astrology.—In the infancy of science, astrology and astronomy were confounded, and thought merely to relate to the causes, history, and indications, of the appearances in the heavens; in the course of time the two studies were separated, and astrology became divided into two parts—natural astrology, which relates to prognosticating the state of the weather; and judicial astrology, the adepts to which profess to predict, not only the fates, fortunes, and character of individuals, but even their occupations. In regard to the antiquity of astrology, it is difficult to fix it. The author of *The Astrologer of the Nineteenth Century* says, 'there can be very little ground for doubting but that Joseph in Egypt, then the chief seat of learning, was enabled, by his skill in astrology, to acquire the favor of Pharaoh, by providing for the emergencies of the Egyptian state in the manner recorded in scripture. We have not seen the nativity of Joseph; but, if we may judge from the affair of Potiphar's wife, we should say that *Venus* had nothing to do with it. Some writers state, that astrology originated in a barbarous age; while others consider it as a sort of aberration from astronomy, and consequently of much later date. Aristotle, Ptolemy, and Cicero ascribe the origin of astrology to the Egyptians and Babylonians, while Lucian contends that both these nations and the Lybians borrowed it from the Ethiopians. Astrology, however, we suspect has its best claim to antiquity among the Bramins in India, or the Chinese, with whom it seems coeval with their history.

TO OUR PATRONS.

As the second volume, which will complete the first year of the *Correspondent*, is drawing to a close, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) *in advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months *in advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if *city* subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year *at our office*, it would

save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

Music.—The Musical Department of the *Free Press Association*, being now organized, the meetings for rehearsal will be held, for the present, in the Temple of Arts, William street, on Sunday morning, at half past 10 o'clock. The members of the Association are earnestly requested to attend; and such of them as have children would do well to bring them along with them.

Science.—It is proposed to commence the regular *scientific* lectures on the forenoon of Sunday the 23d instant, in the Hall of the *Free Press Association*. We shall mention the hour of meeting in our next.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

Paine's Theological Works, complete, 8vo., bound and gilt—\$2; bds. \$1.50.

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MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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Vol. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GOD OF THE CHRISTIANS.

Continued from page 308.

Time will not allow me at present to give you a description of the inhuman barbarity with which Christian slave dealers treat the poor natives of Africa; nor permit me to notice in a particular manner the brutality exercised by despots over their vassals. Suffice it to say, that all kinds of capricious lust, inhuman treatment, and cruel torture, is practised both on the young and the innocent, the old and the infirm; and, however extraordinary it is, all this monstrous wickedness is committed under the eye of this infinitely powerful and good god of the Christians! I do not mean to insinuate that he actually desires men to do bad actions; yet he has given them the nature and the power to do so, and has also placed all kinds of incitements in their way, as it were to stimulate their nature; while he himself lurks in the back ground, secure and unseen, like the incendiary who rejoices because he is at a great distance from the calamity which he has raised.

The disease, and trouble, and harrowing up of feelings which accompany the dissolution of man are most serious evils. If all men were to drop out of existence without these attending evils, then there would be some reason for the Christians to extol the power and goodness of their god. But instead of this, thousands have many weeks and months of weary days, and tiresome nights, before the disease worn carcase is relieved of pain by the tardy messenger of death.

When we see the father and sole support of a family lying on a death bed; his wife, the friend of his bosom, and his little children, the pledges of their conjugal love, gathered around him, to witness with sorrow his sufferings; his emaciated body; his pale countenance; his quivering lips; his sunk and glazed eyes—all denoting his approaching dissolution—let us consider for a moment the feelings of the tender hearted mother, who is on the point of being separated for ever from the man whom she loved above all things on earth: she sees, with horror, herself and her little ones, who were the delight of her husband, scattered upon a merciless world. The feelings of the dying man, if he be yet sensible, must also be harrowed up to the highest pitch, when he thinks on being torn for ever from his wife and helpless children. When he casts his dim eyes around, and perceives his family all bathed in tears, may he not reasonably think that there is evil in this world, and that the deity is callous to the sufferings and feelings of himself and family; or that this deity can-

not give relief? This is no fiction. Such things take place every day; and yet the Christians maintain that their god, who they say has produced this misery, and regulates all its effects, is a being infinitely good and infinitely powerful. Is there a human being who could look on such distress, wretchedness, and sorrow, and not wish that he had the power to grant relief?

I am aware it may be argued that the goodness of the deity is manifested by his having conferred on us the finer feelings and qualities of our nature. But to this I would answer, that his want of power and goodness is also manifested by the evil and misery which is produced, without which our finer feelings and qualities would not be called into action. To say that the deity has permitted distress and misery that our benevolent feelings might be called into action, is tacitly acknowledging that he either wanted the power or the goodness to produce things in such a happy state that benevolence would have nothing to do. But it would appear that, since so much misery was conjured up, this quality of benevolence was given to man to enable him to soften the evils which the deity had produced. Better, far better, to have wanted both the evil and fine feelings which it brings into operation; because these feelings themselves are often the source of much uneasiness, particularly to those who possess them in the highest degree; and they never exist unless preceded and stimulated by evil.

I know it is said by Christians that our sufferings are only just chastisements for our bad habits and actions. But are not our habits and actions the consequences of the propensities and passions which the deity has bestowed upon us? As well might he punish us for walking on our legs as for yielding to the propensities of our nature. It may truly be said that Christians behave to their god like abject slaves towards a despot. They flatter, adore, and pretend to ascribe to him every transient good that happens in the world; but they dare not impute the smallest evil to him, although they firmly believe that he is the author of every thing in existence.

It is also said by Christians that the deity is possessed of infinite knowledge, as well as of infinite power and goodness. If so, he must certainly have known, long before he called things into existence, that evil would arise from the plan which he had designed; and, if possessed of infinite power and goodness, he could not have done otherwise than have prevented this evil. When he was hatching the materials for the universe, why did he not bring forth such matter as would produce universal and unmixed good?

If we had been taught to believe that this world was made, and is regulated, by some being *inferior* to the deity, and that the evils which appear in it arose from the bungling of the artificer, we should have no hesitation in pronouncing it an evil world, indeed. We should then have wished that the deity had condescended to take the trouble of making it himself; because we should have expected him, with his infinite perfections, to have produced it without any mixture of evil. But since we are taught to believe that the world is the immediate production of this perfect god, why do we twist our reasoning powers to exculpate him from being the author of the evil in it? In my opinion, if fault can be found with

the *works* which manifest the character of any being, it is certainly possible that there may be faults in that being himself.

Before men attempt to advocate the infinite power and goodness of the deity, let them visit the hospitals and sick beds of the distressed. Then their ears will be filled with the groans of human beings in the agonies of distress—many of them praying for death to relieve them from their sufferings and misery. Let these men also visit the asylum of the lunatic: there they will see the misery of the mind in all its shades and degrees—a misery frequently as painful as the sufferings of the body. Could any reasonable man, after contemplating these abodes of suffering, believe that the deity is infinitely powerful and infinitely good? Such scenes of horror would call forth sympathy, and a wish to give relief, from the heart of every one whose feelings and power were not formed like those of the god of the Christians.

It is no argument in defence of the infinite power and goodness of the deity to say that in a *future* life he intends to give redress for all the evils in this. It is only, at best, an assertion of the Christians, which they have advanced because they are ashamed that so much evil can exist in a world produced and governed, as they say, by a god possessed of infinite perfections. Let us suppose for a moment that there is to be a future life of felicity; still there have been evils in existence which his godship would not, or could not, prevent.

On the whole, it may reasonably be concluded, that the god of the Christians either has not the power or the will to prevent evil. If he has the will, and not the power, then must he be the most unhappy of all beings in existence, to see so much evil passing before him without his being able to prevent it. If he has the power, and not the will, then is he the most malevolent of all beings, when he can look with indifference on so much evil, without giving himself any concern about it. And if he had not the knowledge to foresee, nor the will nor the power to prevent evil, yet produced it, he must be a strange being, indeed! and governed by a fatality over which he has as little control as a man has over his own destiny.

JUVINUS.

GEOLOGY.

Mr. Editor—Various are the causes assigned for the gradual decrease of the waters from the surface of the earth. Modern geologists are of opinion that the water has been several hundred feet higher in the ocean than it now is; and the appearances of the mountains justify that idea. This, however, applies alone to the *northern* latitudes, as no person of science has given us any account of the appearances in the *southern* latitudes. Some impute the decrease of the water to evaporation; some to the great use of distilled spirits; some to the growth of animals, vegetables, and minerals; some to the wearing away of the beds of the ocean, and Mr. Symmes to its running into the centre of the earth. I will undertake to account for it in a different way, viz.: that the quantity of liquids in our world are at all times the same; and that they only change place. When Columbus proposed sailing west in search of a new continent, he was of opinion that there must be land west of Europe and east

of Asia, to keep a balance between land and water; which turned out according to his calculations. If there is an *equatorial* balance always maintained, why not also a *polar* balance?

At present, the sun is eight days longer north of the equator than south of it in each year, and it is a well known fact that the air is vastly colder at the south than at the north pole.

On examining the various maps of the earth; I find at least three times the quantity of land north of the equator to what there is south of it. South America and Africa are about equally balanced, which leaves New Holland to sustain the balance of Asia, Europe, and North America.

Consequently, a gradual *increase* of weight at the south pole must solve this question, caused by a constant congelation of all the rains or snows carried there by winds, which lie on land and effect this balance, and which will not melt until the sun performs its opposite circle.

A few years since, I had a fine view of a partial lunar eclipse by the *southern* link of the earth. The shadow of the earth at the middle of the eclipse was very circular, which shows that the present state of the south pole is very different from the north.

The *eternal* changes of matter may be accounted for in a more rational manner than by Noah's flood or Synmes's hole.

ARBOREUM.

HOIENLOHISM.

Mr. Editor—Some considerable time ago, (as you will perceive by the mention of persons who are since dead,) a friend put into my hands the following letter, ridiculing a shameful superstitious fraud which was practised at that time in Washington City. I know not whether it would or would not suit the gravity or philosophic character of the *Correspondent*. I copy and transmit it to you. Do with it what you please; but I really think that such a scandalous imposition, and its unprincipled actors and abettors, deserve to be exposed to the derision of mankind in the most pointed manner, as being disgraceful to common sense, to the nation, and to the age in which we live!

I. G.

(COPY.)

To my friend, the Rev. Mr. Kolhman, of White Marsh, Prince George County, Maryland, and the nameless Father Confessor at Washington City.

Fellow Laborers—It is with singular satisfaction I see, through the medium of your heavenly enlightened newspapers, and also by the immediate communications which I have established with the powers, (not of this world,) that the miracle we agreed to work took so wonderfully well with the pious and holy devotees of America. Too much praise cannot be bestowed on the indefatigable exertions of our friend Mr. Carter, the *enlightened* editor of the New York Statesman; I hope his zeal hath been rewarded by a numerous addition to his list of subscribers. Make every effort in his behalf to further his interest; for his piety, truth, and wisdom, in this matter, demand pecuniary encouragement. It is to be lamented that he did not say, in the account of the affair, that a grand procession took place in Washington; that the divine host was carried

in triumph through the streets, attended by all the heads of departments, both houses of congress, chaplains, sergeants at arms, doorkeepers, and all! appropriately dressed for so holy a purpose, to St. Patrick's church, where high mass was performed with all due solemnity, and a grand *te deum* chaunted. Let him insert this in his next account; you know it is equally true with what he has already published.

It is delightful to find that Mrs. Mattingly has come to her speech and appetite, particularly that she was shaking hands with every body, and that she grins and laughs so heartily. Indeed, it is quite a skittish business, and I assure you we all here, who are in the secret, laugh equally heartily with the restored lady. What can we do to requite holy Tom Carberry for appearing so conspicuous, and letting his respectable name (thus made more respectable) be used on this occasion, so necessary to the furtherance of the cause of religion? I shall apply to his holiness to have him canonized, and I beg that, in your future communications with him, you will address him by the name of "Saint Thomas Carberry of the Washington Holy Miracle;" it will give additional dignity and veneration to the mayoralty of the city. His brother, Father Joseph; that is, our "partner Joe," of the Society of Jesus; his sister, the nun of Mount Carmel, of the order of Theresa, in Charles county, Maryland; and a pair of other single sisters who reside with St. Thomas, the divine! the wise! the incomparable and holy mayor! all are deserving of gratitude, admiration, and prayers; and are, indeed, entitled to a share of any profits that may arise from our joint exertions in this holy struggle against the enemies of the church, and the unbelievers and infidels of the age. But, my dear Kolhman, I am sorry you said that the masses, the fastings, the nine days litany of the sacred name of Jesus; that the holy communion was administered by yourself at Georgetown college; and that all these sacrifices, confessions, and devotions were for the *sole object* of curing sick persons. You should not have said *sole object*, but made it a secondary one to that of worshipping the divine majesty, which, it should have been insisted, was the primary intention; whereas you insinuated that the devotions were no more than fees to induce God to act as a hired physician or surgeon. My friend, beware of such indiscreet expressions in future, for it looks too much like showing a *split hoof*; which, you know, we must by all means avoid. You'll particularly give my thanks to our dear friends, the ecclesiastic of high rank in the catholic church, residing in Baltimore; to the Rev. Stephen Debrieson; to the Rev. Mr. Matthews, rector of St. Patrick's church, Washington City; and to the (unnamed) more than ten respectable persons who were present when Mrs. Mattingly, being literally at the point of death, was, by the administration of the adorable sacrament, and the help of my prayers, instantly restored to perfect health. My regards are particularly due to our dear and industrious friend and help-mate, Mr. Carter;—I can never mention him too often;—also to our pious brother Lewis Wilcocks, Esq. of New York; and to the one thousand visitors of Mrs. Mattingly on the first day of her recovery, and the two thousand on the second. Cannot you, with the aid of so many adherents, and the fame of the miraculous cure, contrive to raise a holy subscription of 100 or 150,000 dollars, to be applied to pious purposes?

I think a job of this nature would tell well. Refuse to write to me in future in behalf of any one needing my prayers, unless they come down handsomely with donations in aid of the church.

Would ye think it, my dear coadjutors ! I was really applied to, some time since, by some foolish people, for the help of my prayers in favor of that Spanish rebel Riego ; that notorious enemy to God and the church. My conscience would not allow me to intercede for such a fellow ; so bitter a foe to the king of Spain. How could I address the Virgin in such a cause, when, perhaps, at that moment she was decorated in that blessed and magnificent petticoat, superbly embroidered, the Christian handy work of the adored Ferdinand.

I know it will give you pleasure to be informed that I am highly honored and esteemed by all the monarchs of Europe. I have received letters of congratulation from Alexander the Deliverer ; from Louis the Desired ; from Ferdinand the Adored ; from that pink of honor, loyalty, and gratitude, Charles Jean, of Sweden ; and also from the best of kings, that pattern of chastity, temperance, generosity, charity, and benevolence, George the Fourth of Great Britain.

Let your letters upon real business be conveyed by special and confidential messengers. Be sure to send an accurate account of all monies collected ; and let the division be fairly made amongst us, according to rank and services.

May God preserve you a thousand years.

HÖHENLOHE.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN EPICTETUS AND HIS SON.

Mr. Editor—By inserting the following dialogue, between the Greek philosopher Epictetus and his son, you will oblige a number of the subscribers to the *Correspondent*.

ZENO.

Epictetus. I feel death fast approaching. I have not many minutes to live. You may retain a pleasing remembrance of me, my son, for I have employed my time and all the talents I possessed in trying to improve the world and in endeavoring to diminish the extent of human suffering. I expect, however, that you will not dishonor my memory by giving vent to useless tears and lamentations. I expect you will follow the path I have traced out, and lend your assistance towards banishing vice and misery from the world by enlightening the multitude. I die contented, and with feelings of satisfaction, when I think my means of doing good will not be ended by my death ; as I shall leave behind me, in the person of my son, a willing and sincere agent in the great and good cause of exterminating ignorance, and in teaching people to exert their understanding and to think and judge for themselves. Let me hear you declare that your sole aim will be to ameliorate, by dispelling ignorance, the condition of mankind.

Son. You may be happy my honored father ; for, rest assured, after the noble example you have given me, I shall think no other pursuit worthy of my attention and time. But you seem to have no apprehensions at the approach of death ; do you feel no regret at quitting all sensations ?

F. Wherefore should I feel regret at a circumstance beyond all human control? Could I avert it by regret, there would be some reason for regretting, and I should make no scruple to use those means of prolonging my stay here, since I might still employ myself usefully for my fellow creatures. But as I have no control over the event, I suffer no whining to disturb my last few hours of existence. But let me ask you, wherefore should I feel any apprehensions at dying?

Son. Because it appears to me, that you are on the brink either of total annihilation, or you are on the eve of a new state of existence. It is the fatal ignorance of what is going to happen to you that should raise the feelings of apprehension.

E. If I am, as you say, in total ignorance upon this subject, there is not the shadow of reason for alarm, for no alarm will dispel that ignorance. What is death, my son? Wherefore should the death of a man cause more anxiety than the death of any of the other less intelligent animals? All the knowledge that we can gather from experience, regarding death, is, that we are deprived of all sensation. Now without sensation what have we to fear? Death can only act in three different ways. I must either have a continuation of sensation which I have already experienced in this life; or, I must be deprived of sensation altogether; or lastly, I must have other and new sensations. Now, if I am to have a continuation of the sensations of this life, I am not in ignorance concerning what they will be. By being able to appreciate them, I need not feel any alarm, since, by possessing such sensations, my life will be merely in a state of prolongation. If, as in the second case, I am totally deprived of sensation, what have I to apprehend? Nothing can happen to me that can be of consequence, since I shall no longer possess the capability of feeling, and therefore pleasure or pain will be equally negative in their efforts upon me. If, as in the last case, I have other sensations given to me, perfectly different from any of those I have hitherto experienced, I am again relieved from all apprehensions; because, to feel those new sensations, I must be remodelled, must become a different creature altogether. Why then should I feel any apprehensions for entering into a state of which I cannot have the remotest idea.

Son. Your reasons are unanswerable. To the philosopher, death has no more terror than his nightly slumbers. But this new sect of religionists who have come out of Palestine, and who preach a continuation of existence after death, seem to think that the present sensations will also continue, and that it is through their medium that punishment will be inflicted for bad conduct here.

E. What! is there any sect of people from Judea reviving the superstitions and fables of the poets?

Son. You have always taught me that the word *virtue* had no meaning attached to it, without it meant a course of actions beneficial to mankind, in extending the general happiness, by pointing out the paths that lead to the pleasurable sensations, and by teaching others to avoid the roads that conduct to the painful sensations. But this new sect from Palestine makes virtue consist in very useless and, I might add, mischievous actions. In fact, it is quite of a new species that I never have heard of before.

E. Do these people inculcate doctrines that do not tend to promote human happiness? What is this new sect?

Son. It is composed of Jews who sell rags and love charms, and who were notorious at Rome for passing base money.

E. Do they teach virtue by the same rule as that by which they weigh their money.

Son. They do not make virtue to consist of a train of actions useful to promote human happiness; they place it in circumcising themselves; and they say you cannot be a good man unless you are dipped in or sprinkled with water, by one of their priests, who repeats certain magical words over you, as "I put you in the water in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." But even upon this point they are not agreed. They have partly divided into Circumcisers and Water Sprinklers: some say cutting off the foreskin makes the party a virtuous character; others say there is no need to perform this operation. One party affirms water to be absolutely essential to form the good man; the others ridicule this, and say it is of no consequence. But they all agree upon one point; they unanimously preach that we must give *them* money.

E. The ceremonies you have been telling me only merit laughter and contempt. But wherefore do they require money? Do they perform any labors that merit the reward? Do they ask for money in order to employ it in acts useful to society?

Son. Ah! my father, this sect makes a very different application of it. They apply it to purposes of self aggrandizement. Not only do they exact our contributions, but they require us to deliver up to them every thing we possess, even to the last obole.

E. Nay, do not joke with me, nor try to impose upon me. There is but one class of people in this society who act in this manner, and they are thieves by profession. Such people it is our duty to bring before the tribunals of justice. Has any person denounced this sect according to its deserts?

Son. Your questions make me smile! They do not call themselves thieves, but would rather compare themselves to merchants who give the finest commodity in the world for money, for they promise in exchange for it a never ending life. If, in bringing your wealth to them, you keep back only enough to subsist your wife and children with the commonest diet, they pretend to have the power to make you drop down dead instantly. By the influence of fear, they work so upon the timid and uneducated part of the people, that they are believed.

E. These people are worse than absurd, they are assassins to the peace of society—propagators of vice and misery..

To be continued.

Tomb.—A certain, and, I believe, the only asylum for mortals, from the tyranny and oppression of kings; and the depravity, hypocrisy, and intolerance of priests! When I pass by a burial place, I think I see engraved upon every tomb stone, "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and I will give you rest."

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE TENTH.*Continued from page 331.*

This predilection to embody every natural phenomenon gave birth to the thousands of deities which composed the pagan mythology, whether they were benevolent or malignant beings. In the fable of Jupiter and Leda, for instance, we have a striking example of this. The ancient poets expressed *rain* by saying that Jupiter descended in that form. Jupiter *descending in a silvery shower* implied the *falling of snow*; and, as the swan is a symbol of snow, on account of its delicate whiteness, it might be said by a poet that Jupiter descended in the form of a swan; which would imply a change of form into that of a swan. *Leda* is compounded of two words, which together mean the *extreme end*; and, being applied to the year, denotes *the last month*. Thus the descent of Jupiter on Leda becomes intelligible. It was in the month of December, the *time of snow*, that the king of the gods is said, in *allegorical language*, to have assumed the form of that bird, which was considered the symbol of whiteness. Jupiter, transformed into a swan, enjoyed Leda; or, according to other interpretations, Leda, transformed into a swan, was enjoyed by Jupiter. The produce was two eggs, from which came Castor and Pollux, who *hunted on white horses*; an emblem of the care which was taken, at the commencement of the snow, to drive in their stock of cattle, to prevent their being lost by the severity of the ensuing winter.

The story in the Bible about the sons of God visiting the daughters of men, and a race of giants, or mighty men, being the consequence of this intercourse, might have been easily explained on the same principles, had the narrator of that story not told it in a confused and obscure manner. There is sufficient, however, to show its true bearing, and that, like the allegories of the pagans, with whom they had intercourse, it was originally intended to signify an operation of certain principles of Nature acting on each other, and producing some striking result; and not that gods, or the sons of gods, actually assumed the form of men, and cohabited with the females of our species. By adopting this mode of explanation, we shall be able to understand many other passages in the Bible, which, otherwise, would remain inexplicable; and reduce to its proper level all the allegorical and mystical language with which it teems.

Verse 5. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it *repented* the Lord that he made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

When, in a recent lecture, I had occasion to depict the god of the Jews as I found him delineated in their own books, it was thought that I had drawn too vivid a picture. I was not surprised at this, because as very few even of those few who read the Bible permit themselves to reflect on it, they could not be otherwise than startled when the true character there given of him was presented to them in a moment of calm deliberation. But let those who thought me too severe peruse only the passage I have just read, and they will, I am persuaded, agree with me that it is impossible to represent deity in a more disgusting and horrible light than is there done. The almighty maker of heaven and earth; who can control the hearts of men as he pleases; who is described as not wishing to destroy the righteous with the wicked; as anxious that none shall perish, but that all should turn to him and live—this kind, beneficent, and all powerful being, rather than turn the creatures he had formed from their wicked course and make them virtuous, which he could have done by a single word, gives way to the most malignant feelings—*repents* that he had made man—is *grieved in his heart* for having done so; and, rather than utter that single word, which would have made them in a moment every thing he could wish, resolves, in the bitterness of his heart, to *destroy man* from the face of the earth. But this is not all: the being whom priests are constantly extolling for his *justice*, as well as his *mercy*, is represented in this same sacred book as not content with destroying man, the real offender, but is made in his fury to doom the “beasts of the field, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air,” who are not even said to have offended him, to the same dreadful fate! Can words be found in any language to exhibit in its genuine colors a conduct so monstrously unjust?

Is it in this display of destructive abandonment that we are to discover the exalted character of God? Is it in consigning the care of the universe to a being so changeable and imperfect that we are to find that sublime exhibition of perfection which is said to be given of deity in the scriptures? Is it in God saying that he saw the wickedness of man had become great on the earth (which implies that he was not aware of this result before he created him) that we are to discover proofs of omniscience? Can any one believe that an all perfect being can repent? If he can, what then becomes of his most essential attribute—immutability? Will any one believe that the munificent ruler of Nature, who holds in his hands the destinies of universal existence, could repent—could be grieved at his heart for his former conduct? Where is the use of telling us in the Bible that God “is *not* the son of man to repent,” while they make him in this instance to say, no less than twice, that he *repented he had made man*? How can it be believed that holiness itself could feel compunction? Is not this at once annihilating the infinity of divine perfections, and reducing the character of Jehovah to a level with the most feeble and degraded of the human race?

The fact is, the Jews, this chosen race, so highly favored by heaven, were infinitely more ignorant of the principles of theism than any of the most savage nations that then existed. If they worshipped but one god, he was so vicious, imperfect, cruel, ferocious, and vindictive in his character, that they would have been better without any object of worship.

In that case, the bloody murders which the Jewish nation committed, under the sanction of divine authority, would never have stained the annals of the world.

We shall, perhaps, be accused in this instance, as we have frequently been before, of perverting the scriptures. We shall be told that the word *repent*, as applied to deity, is only a *figurative* expression, used in this case merely to denote the displeasure of God against sin. But what authority is there for this interpretation? Not, surely, Bible authority; for the same expression is used in other parts of that book, in the precise sense we have used it; that is, indicative of God having sorrow—of regretting that he had done so and so, and resolving, as the consequence of that regret and that sorrow, to pursue a different course. When the writer of the Pentateuch tells us that God bade Jacob go down into Egypt, and *promised* that he would certainly bring him up again,—but he never returned alive,—was not this changing his views respecting that patriarch? Huldah the prophet promised king Joseph, in the words of the Lord, that he should die in peace; yet he died in war! What was this but departing from a previous resolution? When Hezekiah was sick, Isaiah told him that he should surely die and not live. But the prophet having informed him how good the king had been, he so prevailed on the Lord, that he promised him by Isaiah fifteen years longer life. Is not this another instance of the Lord's departing from a previous purpose—changing his mind—or repenting? In fact, God is said by Jeremiah to have repented so often, that he acknowledged he was tired of repenting. The words are, (c. 15, v. 6,) "I am weary with repenting."

But there are texts which go farther, and represent God not only falsifying his word, but his oaths. To the Jews he said, (Numbers, 14th, 30 and 34,) "Ye shall *not* come into the land, concerning which I *swore* to make you dwell; and ye shall know my *breach of promise*." In the beginning of the 89th psalm, the promises of God to David, by *covenant* and by *oath*, are largely set forth; and, in the end of it, David complains of God's *breach*, both of his *covenant* and his *oath*. "Thou hast made *void* the covenant of thy servant: Lord, where are thy former loving kindnesses which thou *swarest to David in thy truth*." Jeremiah prophesied king Zedekiah should die in peace; and yet the poor king had his sons slain before him; his eyes then put out, himself bound in chains, and confined to a prison, where he died. What were all these violations of covenants and of oaths, but a change of mind—a grieving—a repenting on the part of the Lord; and for the precise same wanton and barbarous purpose that he repented when he resolved to destroy man from the earth. If we are not to use the term *repenting*, by what name are we to call the changes in Jehovah's mind which produced such terrible and afflicting calamities?

The remaining part of the 5th chapter of Genesis is taken up with statements respecting the disgust which God exhibited as to his own works. He complains of the earth being "filled with violence," although he might have prevented this with the same ease that he uttered the complaint. He says that "all flesh had corrupted his way," when it was in his power, and without any effort, to have made men incapable of a corrupt or immoral act. In short, the language he uses to denote the general deprava-

vity implies that all he had done; his giving existence to the universe, to man, to beasts, and the establishment of that order which he had pronounced "all very good," were defective, inadequate to the ends which he intended, and totally useless. Instead of endeavoring to remedy these evils by means which it might have been expected a wise, a merciful, and omnipotent being would have employed, he gives way to the worst of passions; he yields to the most angry feelings. Revenge for the disappointment he had met with brings on a fit of fury; and, in the height of its operation, he pronounces the tremendous malediction of utterly destroying the earth, and every living thing upon it. "And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and behold I will destroy them with the earth."

Having pronounced this very merciful decree, so characteristic of the god of the Jews as well as of the Christians, he proceeds to give Noah (whom for reasons not explained he had determined to preserve with his family) instructions about building a vessel in which he would be safe while he, the Lord, was engaged in carrying his wrathful intentions into execution. "And behold, (says he, emphatically,) I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die." A flood, or universal deluge, was thus resolved on by eternal wisdom as the only means by which he could pacify his indignation, and obliterate the errors of his former designs!

MISCELLANEOUS.

BIBLE CONTRADICTIONS.

Continued from page 317.

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|---|---|
| David took 700 horsemen. 2 Sam. viii. 4. | David took 7000 horsemen. 1 Chron. xviii. 4. |
| Forty thousand horsemen. 2 Sam. x. 8. | Forty thousand footmen. 1 Chron. xix. 8. |
| Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam. 2 Sam. xi. 3. | The daughter of Amiel. 1 Chron. iii. 5. |
| Joab's number 800,000 and 50,000. 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. | Joab's number 1,100,000 and 470,000. 1 Chron. xi. |
| Shall seven years famine come. 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. | Shall three years famine come. 1 Chron. xxi. 12. |
| Nor day nor night. Isa. lxiii. 11. | No night there. Rev. xxi. 25. |
| There is no God. Isa. xlv. 14. | I am the Lord thy God. Isa. xlv. 21. |
| One of a city and two of a tribe. Jer. iii. 14. | Twelve thousand of a tribe. Rev. vii. 4. |
| Take a wife of fornication. Hos. i. 2. | Fly fornication. 1 Cor. vi. 18. |
| Israel shall be ashamed. Hos. x. 6. | My people shall never be ashamed. Joel ii. 26. |

Jacob begat Joseph. Matt. i. 16.

Jesus began not to preach before John was in prison. Matt. iv. 12.

Peter called by the sea side. Matt. iv. 18.

Preached on the mount. Mat. v. 1.

Let men see your good works. Matt. v. 16.

If thine eye offend thee pull it out. Matt. v. 29.

Resist not evil. Matt. v. 39.

Judge not. Matt. vii. 1.

Go not in the way of the Gentiles. Matt. x. 5.

Take no staves. Matt. x. 9, 10.

This is Elias. Matt. xi. 14.

Then began he to upbraid. Matt. xi. 20.

A woman, a Canaanite. Matt. xv. 22.

After six days. Matt. xvii. 1.

Behold two blind men. Matt. xx. 30.

Call no man father. Matt. xxiii. 9.

Prepared from the beginning. Matt. xxv. 24.

Two days before the passover. Matt. xxvi. 1.

Spoken by Jeremiah. Matt. xxvii. 9.

The thieves. Matt. xxvii. 44.

Crucified the third hour. Mark. xv. 25.

They came to the sepulchre at sunrise. Mark xvi. 2.

One young man sitting on the right side. Mark xvi. 5.

Salute no man. Luke x. 4.

Blessed the eyes that see what you see. Luke x. 23.

Beginning from Jerusalem. Luke xxiv. 47.

I take no man's testimony. John v. 34.

I bear no record of myself. John v. 31.

Joseph the son of Eli. Luke ii. 23.

Preached to Nicodemus before John. iii. 22.

Called in Jesus's lodgings. John i. 39, 40, &c.

In the plain. Luke vi. 17.

Let them not see it. Matt. vi. 1.

No man hateth his own flesh. Eph. v. 29.

Resist the devil. James iv. 7.

Thou shall judge. 1 Cor. vi. 2.

Go teach all nations. Matt. xxviii. 19.

Take nothing save a staff. Mark vi. 8.

I am not Elias. John i. 21.

He upbraided none. James i. 5.

A Syrophenician, a Greek. Mark vii. 26.

About eight days after. Luke ix. 28.

One blind man. Luke xviii. 35.

I write to you fathers. 1 John ii. 13.

I go to prepare. John xiv. 2.

Six days before the passover. John xii. 1.

Spoken by Zachariah. Zach. xi. 13.

One thief. Luke xxiii. 39.

The sixth hour and darkness, &c. Luke xxiii. 44.

While it was yet dark. John xx. 1.

Two angels, one at the head and the other at the feet. John x. 12.

Salute Urbane. Rom. xvi. 9.

Blessed they that have not seen. John xx. 29.

Began from Galilee. Acts x. 37.

You are my witnesses. John xv. 27.

I bear record of myself. John viii. 14.

Labor not for meat that perishes.
John vi. 27.

Moses gave not that bread. John
vi. 32.

The world cannot hate you. John
vii. 7.

I and my father are one. John
x. 50.

Lay down my life for my friends.
John xv. 13.

Not lawful for us to put any man
to death. John xviii. 31.

Touch me not. John xx. 17.

'Tis not for you to know the sea-
sons. Acts i. 7.

I go bound in spirit to Jerusalem.
Acts xx. 22.

God gave them up to vile affec-
tions. Rom. i. 26.

Nothing can separate me from
Christ. Rom. viii. 39.

One esteems a day, &c. let eve-
ry man, &c. Rom. xiv. 5.

Epenetus the first of Achaia.
Rom. xvi. 5.

I write not these things to shame
you. 1 Cor. iv. 14.

Be ye not servants of men. 1
Cor. vii. 23.

Bear one another's burdens. Gal.
vi. 2.

Women to pray and prophecy
covered. 1 Cor. xi. 5.

You are no more strangers. Eph.
ii. 19.

Let him that stole steal no more.
Eph. iv. 28.

The Lord is at hand. Phil. iv. 5.

We shall be ever with the Lord.
1 Thess. iv. 17.

Appointed that all men to die.
Heb. ix. 27.

They obtained the promise. Heb.
xi. 33.

Once more I shake heaven. Heb.
xii. 26.

All things are become new. Rev.
xxi. 5.

He that works must eat. 2 Thess.
iii. 10.

You did eat the same. 1 Cor.
x. 3, 4.

The world hateth you. John xv.
19.

My father, greater than I. John
xiv. 28.

For his enemies. Rom. v. 10.

We have a law, and by our law
he ought to die. John xix. 7.

Feel me. John xx. 27.

Of times and seasons, brethren, I
would not have you be ignorant.
1 Thess. v. 1.

The spirit saith he shall not go.
Acts xxi. 4.

Lust of the flesh, &c. not of the
Father. 1 John ii. 16.

I wish myself cursed from him.
Rom. ix. 3.

Ye observe days, I am afraid of
you. Gal. iv. 10, 11.

Stephanas the first fruits of Acha-
ia. 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

I speak to shame you. 1 Cor. vi.
5.

Servants obey your masters.
Eph. vi. 5.

Every man must bear his own
burden. Gal. vi. 5.

Let your women be silent. 1
Cor. xiv. 34.

I beseech you as strangers. 1
Peter ii. 11.

Let him that is unjust be unjust
still. Rev. xxii. 11.

Let no man deceive you, its not
at hand. 2 Thess. ii. 2.

Reign with him one thousand
years. Rev. xx. 6.

Enoch should not see death. Heb.
xi. 5.

They obtained not the promise.
Heb. xi. 39.

We receive a kingdom that can-
not be shaken. Heb. xii. 28.

No new thing. Eccles. i. 9.

To be continued.

Fame.—A term in general most barbarously misapplied. Murderers have been styled heroes, and conquerors gods. To immortalize *their* memory, mausoleums have been raised, the arts of invention ransacked, and the imagination of genius exhausted; while the *real benefactor* of mankind, cast during his mortal pilgrimage in an humble sphere, may, after death, continue to rot in an obscure, neglected grave, without any honorable memorial to preserve his name from oblivion; but it is time such unnatural prejudices and unjust distinctions should cease. Every generous spirit aspires to *fame*. It should be the virtuous study of philosophy to give to public gratitude a proper direction. Too long have genius and talents been prostituted at the footstool of power, to adulate the crimes of *conquerors* and *kings*. A brighter example is due. Let us *justly* bestow the meed of fame. Let us strew choicest flowers over the tombs of virtue; let us venerate, with affectionate gratitude, the shades of those *true heroes*, who, during life, had virtue to resist, and fortitude to endure, the fiercest malice of *tyrannic* power. Let us consecrate to immortality the memory of all those patriots who have suffered and bled for the cause of freedom.

Priests.—"In every country, and in every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty: he is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own. It is easier to acquire wealth and power by this combination than by deserving them."—*Jefferson*.

TO OUR PATRONS.

As the second volume, which will complete the first year of the *Correspondent*, is drawing to a close, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) *in advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months *in advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if *city* subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year *at our office*, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

Music.—The Musical Department of the *Free Press Association* being now organized, the meetings for rehearsal will be held for the present in the Temple of Arts, William street, on Sunday morning, at half past 10 o'clock. The members of the Association are earnestly requested to attend; and such of them as have children would do well to bring them along with them.

Lectures on Science.—The first regular scientific lecture before the *Free Press Association* will be delivered tomorrow, (Sunday,) the 23d instant, in the Temple of Arts, William street, at 12 o'clock noon, precisely.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

Paine's Theological Works, complete, 8vo., bound and gilt—\$2; bds. \$1.50.

Paine's Age of Reason, parts I. and II., a new pocket edition, bound and gilt—37 1-2 cents. *.* A liberal discount will be given to those who purchase a quantity of the *Age of Reason*.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

. Orders for books, in every department of literature, punctually attended to.

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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Vol. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SUPERNATURALS.

Mr. Editor—From an old collection of voyages, commonly known as Churchill's collection, in six volumes folio, I take the liberty of sending you an extract. The particular voyage from which the extract is taken is entitled "An Account of Cochin China, in two parts: the first treats of the temporal state of that kingdom; the second, of what concerns the spiritual, written in Italian by the reverend father Christopher Borri, a Milanese of the Society of Jesus, who was one of the first missionaries in that kingdom." If we are to believe the editor of this "account," father Borri, both as to his ample means of information, and his undoubted veracity, is entitled to the public credit. "This relation (in the words of the same editor) is not like those travellers who just pass through a kingdom, or a merchant that touches at ports upon business of trade, and who, consequently, deliver very *fabulous* accounts; either to make their travels the more surprising, or for want of knowing better; taking things upon hearsay. This father, on the contrary, frequently conversing with all sorts of people, and having a settled residence there for years, had the opportunity of *knowing what he writ*." "In fine, (he observes,) the relation of father Borri is curious, though short, and seems to carry all the *air of truth imaginable*, besides the general approbation it has always received in all parts; which is the greatest commendation that can be given it."

Whether this work will be considered as now deserving that "*general approbation*" which the editor says it had every where obtained in his day, will best be seen by the extract itself.

CHAP. IX.

How God opened another way to the conversion of the meanest sort by miraculous means.

It remains that we show how God, acting conformably to the mean, vulgar people of Cochin China, who were used to see phantoms, visions, and apparitions, the devil often appearing to them, was pleased to show some miracles; to the end that, declining in their opinion of diabolical prodigies, they might own the only Lord and singular worker of true wonders.

The devils appear so frequently among those heathens that, not to speak of the oracles they deliver by the mouth of idols, which are in great esteem among the wretched gentiles, they walk about the cities so familiarly in human shapes, that they are not at all feared, but admitted

into company; and this is carried so far, that there are abundance of *incubi* and *sucubi*. And among great people, those husbands account themselves happy who know their wives to have such familiars; for generally they have to do with none but married women; publicly boasting that they are worthy to mix with a nature so much above their own as the devils. It happened in my time, that a woman of great quality, mother to two sons who were Christians, envied by her neighbors, not so much for her beauty as for her dishonest familiarity with the devil, positively refusing to become Christian, came to die in labor; and, by the assistance of the devil, brought forth two eggs. Now it being held as most certain among them that the devil, her incubus, was god of the river, they did not bury the body in a cave, building a chapel over it as is the usual custom; but, carrying it in solemn procession to a river, cast it into the deep, together with the two eggs, saying, let her go to the lord of the river, since she was worthy to have to do with him when living. Among the common sort this filthiness is not esteemed an honor; but they rather account it a grievous distemper, when their women are thus molested by the devil, as we should by being possessed. These women, therefore, understanding that the religion of the fathers was altogether opposite to the devil, they imagined they might have some *medicine* against this distemper; calling holy things, as the *water of baptism*, *Agnus Dei*, and the like, *mediums*. And, by the grace of God, all those that carried with them any bit of *Agnus Dei* were never more molested by the devil; yet with this difference, that those who were not Christians saw the incubus come to the bedside, but it had not power to lay hold on or touch their persons; whereas the *Christians* perceived that he could not come near the chamber door, which occasioned several to be baptized.

Though these *incubus devils*, appearing in human shapes, do no harm to the body, yet sometimes there are others that appear in horrid and frightful shapes; and the Cochim Chinese, who have often seen, describe them after the manner as we paint them; for example, with a cock's face, a long tail, a bat's wings, a hideous look, bloody flaming eyes; and when they appear in such shapes they are much feared, being then generally hurtful to men, sometimes carrying them up to the tops of houses, to cast them down headlong. We once heard a wonderful noise of people in our street, crying out very loud, *marqui, marco*; that is, the devil in a monstrous shape; whereupon some gentiles came running to desire us, that since we had weapons against those evil spirits, we would go relieve those distressed people who were infested by them. Having recommended ourselves to God, and armed ourselves with *Cropes*, *Agnus Deis*, and *relics*, we went two of us to the place where the devil was, and came so near, that we only wanted turning of a corner to be upon him, when he suddenly vanished, leaving three prints of feet upon the pavement, *which I saw*, and were above two spans long, with marks of a cock's talons and spurs. Some attributed the devil's flying to the virtue of the holy cross and the relics we carried with us. These frightful apparitions God has made use of to attract many to his holy faith; yet not denying them good visions, as will appear by the following accidents which happened before me in that kingdom. The first was, that, as we were one day in our own house, we saw a procession of vast multitudes of people in a field,

making towards us: when they came, being asked what they would have, they answered that a most beautiful lady came from their land, through the air, on a throne of bright clouds, who bid them go to that city, where they should find the fathers who would show them the sure way to bliss, and the knowledge of the true god of heaven. This made us give thanks to the *blessed virgin*, whose this great benefit was owned to be; and, having catechised and baptized the people, sent them home well pleased.

The second was at another time. Father Francis Buzome and I, returning homeward together, first a multitude of people came to another place, who, having paid us very much respects, told father Francis Buzome they were come to him to teach them what he had promised them the night before, when he was in their town. The father was astonished at their demands, having never been in the place they spoke of; but, examining into the matter, I found that God, of his infinite mercy, had caused some angels in the fathers' shape, or in a dream had given those people some knowledge of our holy faith. The fame of these miracles being spread abroad, such numbers of people were converted, that the church given us by the governor was too little, and we were forced to build one larger; his wife, children, and kindred, with many other Christians, contributing towards it.

Here ends the ninth chapter of father Borri's *Spiritual History of Cochin China*, in 1617, during his connexion with the Portuguese mission in that country; which, according to the same account, continued until 1622, when he returned to his native land, and, very much like our *own missionaries*, set down to write a most *wonderful account* of his success; rather too miraculously seasoned for the present day, we confess; but, bating this circumstance, there is not, perhaps, much in his performance out of the due keeping of *such histories*. Taken all in all, it is certainly worth reading, were it only for the exemplification of the facility with which such *holy falsehoods* are fabricated, and with what gravity they may be uttered by those of the *trade*, to deceive an ignorant and a credulous public.

Now take a plain matter of fact man, of natural good sense and scientific acquirements, and he shall be found a mere dunce in such matters. Your good Christian shall doze over such men's histories, as insipid and dull: even his most fanciful illustrations rise not above common life; and all his metaphors are most lamentably *shackled by truth*. Not so the religious scholar's productions; for, whether he be among the number of those who write to sustain a national and despotic hierarchy, or to pull such down, and in its stead to rear an order of religious government, more congenial with freedom, still he finds an ample store of incident and illustration in his Bible. Whatever, in fact, may be his object, he can feel no stint. His matter and machinery are all at hand; gods, devils, angels, cherubim, seraphim, prophets, apostles, saints, and witches. With such a host of supernatural agents, not forgetting the blessed virgin, together with their concomitant *decrees, acts, doctrines, prophecies, miracles, and witcheries*, he must be a dunce indeed if he does not become interesting, especially to those of a religious turn.

When father Borri wrote this book, the people, no doubt, were more ignorant than at present: but even now, and in our own country, too, this

same *spiritual account* of his would be read with *pious gravity* and most *prayerful* attention. "Ah! we read of such things in the Bible," would be the response of many an honest soul, in reading his most extravagant lies. Perhaps there is no better way with these than a *surfeit* of such godly falsehoods. What will the "*Antidote*" say to such an antidote for religious credulity.

Athens, December 6, 1827.

LOOKER ON.

History records few truths, indeed, of more importance; and none, certainly, that the people should more generally know, than that when Religion gets the staff of state in her hands, she is ever more for *breaking the heads* than *mending the hearts* of her subjects.

L. O.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN EPICTETUS AND HIS SON.

Continued from page 344.

Son. By dealing in the marvellous and mysterious, they have obtained a strong hold over the imagination of the ignorant people. It is believed that they are great magicians, who hold human life at their command; that they can kill by a word; and this sect declare they have such power, and that they obtained this power from the person whom they style the Father, through the medium of the Son. One of their proselytes, who smelt most offensively, but who preached in the suburbs and out houses of the city with much success, told me that one of his relations, called Ananias, having sold his farm, to please the son in the name of the father, (this is the magical term these people make use of,) brought the money to one of their head priests, called Barjona; but, as Ananias had not lost his appetite because he had been sprinkled with water and had had the magical names pronounced over him, he kept back a small portion of the money produced by the sale to purchase food for his family, and, for doing this, Barjona punished him with death upon the spot. His wife came in afterward, and Barjona made her die also, only by pronouncing a single word.

E. My son, if you are speaking the truth to me, these people are the most abominable and barefaced criminals upon the face of the earth. But it strikes me that you have been imposed upon, and that these stories are too ridiculous to be true.

Son. Oh no, my father: all that I relate to you is openly taught and implicitly believed by this sect. Moreover, they have the impudence to try to persuade people, that if they obtain from them a promise of this eternal bliss for their money, they have the better bargain of the two.

E. This doctrine supposes God to be worse than the worst of mankind. Can we imagine, if eternal bliss or life were to be the portion of part of the living animals who cover the face of the earth, that that decree would not have been long ago known to man as surely as he knows that he must die; so that I, you, and all the men and women who live in the various parts of the world, would not feel a doubt on the subject? Does it not carry the stain of falsehood strongly marked upon it when we remember that it proceeds from the most immoral people of Asia, who dwell in an unfrequented corner of the earth? It is truly astonishing

that it should ever have obtained the least credence. But of what use is this doctrine proposed to be of to mankind?

Son. By holding out the belief of reward and punishment in a life to come, it is proposed to diminish crime in this life from the fear of the anticipation of what may await us hereafter.

E. Oh! the inconceivable folly of mankind! Do these ideots bring forward this short sighted and cruel doctrine as a proof of the wisdom and benevolence of their god?

Son. They say that God himself visited earth to declare it.

E. I do not know which to admire most, the lying fabrication or the folly of the doctrine, the injustice or the malevolence! They propose to prevent crime, first by postponing the punishment due to it to a time when the perpetrators shall no longer be able to commit it; and secondly, by giving them so heavy a quantity as to be out of all proportion to the crime. Experience in legislation has taught men that the only way to lessen crime is to administer the proper chastisement immediately on its commission; and that by so doing, by rendering the punishment immediate and certain, less cruel and barbarous punishments will suffice; because a small *immediate* punishment has more effect in deterring men from committing crimes than a heavy *deferred* one. It is imperatively required by the laws of benevolence, that if evil is a necessary means to our end, every expedient should be made use of to reduce it to the smallest quantity possible. It is cruelty; it belongs only to a malignant nature, to apply evil in a way which demands a larger quantity than would have otherwise sufficed. To try at once the amazing absurdity and uselessness of this doctrine, let us suppose that the Athenians should pass a law by which they enacted that no act of theft should be investigated or punished until twenty or more years had passed after the commission, or till the life of the thief was near its end. Is it not evident that, in this case, all punishment, however dreadful, would be destitute of power? Philosophy teaches us to apply the penalty due to bad actions as surely and instantly as, when we put our finger into the fire, we are burned for our folly. Would it not be wicked beyond expression if, instead of the immediate slight burn our finger receives upon touching the flames, the pain should be postponed for a few years, in order that we might lose our arm, or life, by the fire only then taking effect?

Son. I fully agree with you, my father, and I wish some of these poor deluded people could have the benefit of your remarks. How soon would the truth of your reasonings dispel the error into which these wretched men plunge the multitude. Besides these doctrines, this sect, as usual, pretends to perform miracles. You shrug your shoulders, my father, and I do not wonder at it.

E. The ignorant delight in the marvellous. The less prevalent you find knowledge, the more you will find fable and superstition prevail. But have these Jews admitted you to see the performance of one miracle?

Son. Oh, no: philosophers, and those who love reason and truth better than fable and lies, never are permitted to enter into the mysterious depths of miracles; but I have spoken to many people, both men and wo-

men, who tell me that many of their gossips and grandmothers have been witnesses of them.

E. Enough, enough of their absurdities. What moral precepts do this sect inculcate?

Son. I will repeat some of them, and you shall judge how far they are entitled to adoption. First, they assert that a man of property cannot be a good man, and they exemplify this precept by saying, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to inherit the life that is to come, in what they call the kingdom of heaven. It is very clear, that it is for the interest of these priests the rich, and people of moderate property, should believe them; because in proportion as these latter make themselves beggars, the former secure the possession of good things that they otherwise must labor to obtain. They maintain that only fools, and those who are poor in spirit and want information; in fact, only such as are ignorant like little children will be happy, or, as they call it, blessed: that if people do not leave their father, their mother, and their relations for the sake of these doctrines, they never will be permitted to enter the kingdom: that the preachers come to bring war, not peace: that when any person is inclined to give a marriage feast, he must force all the strangers and chance passengers into the house to partake of the feast; and all those among this chance medley who are not prepared with a nuptial robe, are to be cast into a dungeon.

E. My life draws rapidly to a close; but I am filled with grief and indignation at the recital of these enormities and mischievous follies. Most imperatively are you called on, my beloved son, to exert yourself to instruct your poorer brethren, and, indeed, mankind in general, and to show them the errors and falsehoods that are attempted to be imposed on them. Guide them to seek out happiness by acquiring the knowledge requisite to diminish the mass of misery that surrounds them: teach them to be just and kind, and to assist each other in misfortune: engage them to the performance of acts calculated to increase the sum of human happiness. Alas! I foresee that vice and misery will continue long in the world if this superstition becomes predominant. Let me be assured that the son of Epictetus will devote his life to the removal of ignorance from among mankind. To stop the tide of these absurdities is not possible by any other means than by instructing the reasoning faculties and by teaching a good and sound morality. Such errors and superstitions may prevail for some years—nay, even for some centuries, but reason and truth will prevail at last. Farewell!

BABABEC AND THE FAKIRS.

(Translated from *Voltaire*.)

Some time ago, when I was living in the city of Benares, in the ancient country of the Bramins, I neglected no opportunity of acquiring information on every subject connected with this extraordinary people. I understood the Hindoo language tolerably well, and, as the best means of getting knowledge, spoke seldom, while I listened a great deal, and kept my eye on every thing that passed in the city. I lodged in the house of Omri, my correspondent, by far the worthiest man I ever knew: he

was of the religion of the Bramins. I have the honor to be a mussulman, but we never exchanged one angry word on the subject of either Mahomet or Brama. We performed our ablutions, each in the manner he thought the most orthodox; and we drank of the same lemonade, and ate of the same rice, like two brothers.

One day we walked together to the Pagoda of Gavani, and on our route fell in with several troops of fakirs. Some of them were of the party of the "janguis," or contemplative fakirs; others were disciples of the ancient gymnosophists, and, the reverse of the former sect, led a life more active than passive. It is well known that the language they use is precisely that of the ancient Bramins, and that in this language there exists a work called "The Veidam," which, according to their account, is certainly the oldest book in all Asia, without even the exception of the Zendervesta.

I happened to pass before a fakir who was studying this sacred volume. "Ah! miserable infidel," cried he, "you have made me lose the exact number of the vowels I was calculating! and, for so doing, my soul will, after my death, pass into the accursed body of a hare, instead of taking up its dwelling in that of a parrot, as I had every reason to flatter myself would have been the case!" I gave him a rupee, to console him for the immensity of the loss I had innocently occasioned him, and went my way. Presently, having the misfortune to sneeze, the noise I made roused a second fakir from a state of divine contemplation, or trance. "Where am I!" exclaimed he, "what a dreadful disaster! I no longer see the tip of my nose; the celestial light has vanished!"* "If I am the unfortunate cause of your sight extending beyond the tip of your nose," replied I, "here is a rupee to repair the mischief I have done, and may your celestial light be speedily renewed!"

Having thus discreetly extricated myself from these perilous adventures, I mixed with a very large company, which was principally composed of gymnosophists. Several of this sect had the kindness to offer me small nails, very neatly made, to stick into my arms and thighs, in honor of Brama. With all courtesy, and a proper sense of the obligation they conferred on me, I purchased the nails, which I found extremely well adapted to nail down my carpets with. I found these followers of Brama, in general, employed in a very eccentric manner, according to our way of thinking. Some of them were dancing upon their hands; others upon the slack rope. One party were amusing themselves by hopping upon one leg; others by standing upon their heads. A body rather numerous were loaded with heavy chains of iron; a great many of them, in imitation of horses, wore saddles on their backs, and there were some who vowed to Brahma to keep their heads continually in bushel measures. With the exception of such little peculiarities, these fakirs seemed to be the best kind of people in the world.

My friend Omri took me into the cell of one of the most celebrated of them, named Bababec. We found him as naked as a baboon, with a

* When the fakirs wish to enjoy what they call the celestial light, (which is very common among them,) they direct their eyes toward the tips of their noses, and in that posture await its beams.

chain around his neck that must have weighed at least sixty or seventy pounds. He was seated on a wooden chair, ornamented with an infinite number of the points of small nails, which ran into his backside, and from his manner you would have thought he was seated upon a bed of roses. A great number of women came to consult him upon their affairs: he was the family oracle of Benares, and enjoyed a surprising degree of reputation. I was witness of a very long conversation Omri had with him. "Do you think, father," said he to him, "that, after successfully passing the trial of the seven metempsychosis,"* I may hope to gain admittance to the dwelling of Brama?" "Perhaps," said the fakir: "what kind of life do you lead?" "I endeavor," replied Omri, "to fulfil the duties of a good citizen, a good husband, a good friend, and a good father. I lend money without interest to the rich when they want it, and give freely to the poor. I act as peace maker between my neighbors when they are at variance." "Do you ever drive any nails into your backside?" asked the Bramin. "Never! most reverend father." "That's unfortunate," replied the fakir: "depend upon it, your merits will never carry you higher than the nineteenth heaven! and I'm sorry for it." "Well!" said Omri, "that's very good of you! I am quite contented with my lot. What do I care whether I go into the nineteenth or the twentieth: so as I fulfil my duty in my pilgrimage here below, and am well received hereafter, is it not enough to lead an honest life in this wicked world, and to ascend afterward into the country of Brama? Into which of the different heavens do you expect, then, to go yourself, Mr. Bababec, with your nails and your chains?" "Into the thirty-fifth," said Bababec. "I think you are very ridiculous," answered Omri, "to suppose that your lodging will be higher than mine. This idea of yours seems to me to be only the effect of an impudent and immoderate ambition. You condemn all those who seek after the honors of this world: why do you wish for so great a share of them in the next? And upon what grounds do you imagine that you shall be better treated than I shall be? I give away more money in charity in ten days than it costs you for nails to stick in your posterior parts in ten years. Brama is doubtless much interested in your always going naked! In doing so you certainly are rendering a great service to your country! For my own part, I think much more of him who grows a cabbage, or plants a tree, than of you, and all your vagabond comrades to boot, even though they should pass the whole of their lives without looking farther than the tips of their noses, and should carry pack saddles eternally on their shoulders, to show their extreme greatness of soul!"

Having spoken this, Omri relented, and in a milder tone began to reason with the Bramin with so much success, that he at length persuaded him to bid adieu to his nails and his chain, to go home with him, and to live as an honest man ought to do. They cleaned him, rubbed him with perfumes, and clothed him in a decent manner: he had an apartment in the house with us, and for a whole fortnight was contented and reasonable: he even confessed that he was a hundred times happier than he had

* The Hindoos believe that after death the soul must pass through seven transmigrations into the bodies of different animals before it is finally judged by Brama. An agreeable variation of the purgatory of the papists.

ever been before in his life. But, alas! he lost his credit with the people—the women no longer came to ask for advice. He left Omri; threw off his clothes; twisted his chain round his neck, and resumed his wooden chair, with the nails in his backside, that he might recover his dear reputation!

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE ELEVENTH.

In the beginning of the 9th chapter of Genesis, we are informed that God, after blessing Noah and his sons, told them “the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth on the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea: into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing shall be meat for you: even as the green herb have I given you all things: But flesh, with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.”

From this passage it has been inferred that mankind originally lived on a vegetable diet; and many instances are to be found in Europe, at the present day, where whole families, in affluent circumstances, have abstained for a number of years from animal food, without being afflicted by disease. I know that a difference of opinion on this subject exists among medical men. But it appears to me that the *theoretical* opinions of those who contend for even the moderate use of animal food, are more than counterbalanced by the facts which have been adduced to show the beneficial effects of a vegetable diet.

According to the Bible story, as much uncertainty appears to have existed in the mind of God as to the food most proper for the use of man, as in the minds of our medical practitioners. At first, the great physician, who is said to have given the chief of his works a *perfect* organization, directed him to eat only of the herbs of the field, and the fruit of trees yielding seed. These he calculated were sufficient for the nourishment of man; and, if we are to believe what is said about the duration of human existence before and subsequent to the flood, we shall find that it was not till after the permission had been given to Noah and his sons to eat flesh, that the life of man was shortened. The presumption, therefore, is, that this was occasioned by the change of diet that then took place. But, whether it was so or not, one thing is obvious—namely, that God is represented in the Bible to have been a bungler in physiology. At one time he prescribes a vegetable diet as best adapted to our constitutions; at another, he enjoins the use of fish, flesh, and fowl. These experiments might be excused when resorted to by erring, inexperienced man; but, practised by a being who is supposed to be perfection itself, they place him on a level with the works of his hands.

Again: is it true, as the author of Genesis asserts, that the “fear and the dread” of man is inherent “upon every beast of the earth, upon every

fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea?" Do not the well authenticated accounts of travellers contradict this assertion? Do they not all agree in stating that the beasts and fowls, in those countries first discovered by man, were so tame, so fearless, so little apprehensive of danger, that they allowed themselves to be approached and knocked in the head; and that it was not until experience taught them that the invaders had marked them out as their prey, that they shunned these "lords of creation." Does not every day's experience confirm the fact, that beasts and birds when taken young are not afraid of man? When kindly treated, how easy it is to domesticate them—when abused, how can they be otherwise than in constant dread of their tyrants? All animals, whether man or beast, fowls, fishes, or insects, are capable of being trained: they are the creatures of education; and, as impressions are conveyed to the mind only by the senses, the passions which they display, whether of love, fear, or hatred, altogether depend on the objects presented to them, and the nature of their organization. It is contrary, therefore, to first principles, that beasts, birds, insects, and fishes are naturally afraid of our species; and the reverse is demonstrated by facts.

In the 8th verse of this chapter we are told that God entered into a covenant or agreement with Noah, in which Jehovah promised never to destroy the earth again with water; but, as if distrustful, after the many proofs he had given of a fickle disposition, whether he would be believed in the present case, the text goes on to inform us that he gave to Noah a token by which all future generations would be able to decide as to the divine veracity; while, by the same token, deity himself would be reminded of the nature of his promise.

"And God said, this is a token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you for perpetual generations. I do set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a token of the covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant that is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh, and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be seen in the clouds, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, this is the token of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

By this passage of the Jewish scriptures, it appears that the writer believed there was no rainbow existing before the time of Noah; that it was created for a special purpose; and that in an arbitrary manner God set it in the clouds, to give consolatory assurances to an ignorant and wicked world that he would never be in so great a rage again as to drown mankind. But how is the creating the bow at this particular period to be reconciled to the principles of natural philosophy? The sun, the waters, the exhalations and evaporations had existed for a long time prior. Of course, showers of rain must have been the consequence. The properties of refrangibility and reflexivity must also have been essential in the rays of the sun. It is evident, therefore, that the appearance of rain-

bows must always have been unavoidable, and that the assertion of their having been formed at any particular period, or for any special purpose, is unfounded. In maintaining a contrary opinion, the Bible manufacturers and Bible believers make their god so stupidly forgetful as to require the presence of some palpable object to keep him steady, or to induce him to do his duty.

If God (observes an intelligent correspondent) is omniscient, he cannot stand in need of aids in remembering his promises. But the present instance is one in which even a being of human faculties might remember without the aids of signs and tokens. When a man promises to perform some act at a specified time, there is a possibility that the promise may not be recollected at the proper period for performing the act, and thus it may remain unfulfilled. Signs and tokens, which necessarily present themselves to the mind of the promisers, are, therefore, sometimes useful in preventing such failures. But when a man promises *not* to perform some specific act, such aids are unnecessary, because should he attempt to perform the act he has promised *not* to perform, the work in which he would be engaged would be the best possible token for recalling his promise. If a being of imperfect memory should promise to *destroy* the world at a certain period, it might be possible, if we suppose him engaged in other occupation, that the promise would not be recalled at the proper time, without the aid of a sign. But, should such a being promise *not* to destroy the world with water, it would be by no means probable that he could collect his clouds, and prepare all the machinery necessary for drowning the earth, without once thinking of the promise he had made; and, if this could even be the case, the promise must have so completely passed from his mind, that no sign could recal it. Signs, then, can be of no use to a being of imperfect memory; much less to a deity who is all perfection.

Should we suppose that God stands in need of signs and tokens to assist his memory, the nature of the rainbow is such that it can never be considered in that light. That this may be understood, it is necessary to remember that the rainbow, which appears to the sight to have a *solid* and *tangible* existence, is wholly an optical deception, caused by the light of the sun, which strikes upon the eye of the beholder after being reflected and refracted by the vapor in the air; and that it has no existence, independent of the mind that perceives it, more than the image of the sun seen in the water, or the image of a person or other object seen in a glass; that its variety of color and beauty of form are caused by a modification of the light that strikes the eye, and have no existence without the mind. It follows manifestly from this, that the rainbow cannot exist to a being whose organs of sense are not like those of man, because the light cannot, by striking upon the eye of such a being, cause a similar optical deception in his mind. Neither can it exist to a being whose eyes are not placed in a situation to receive the light of the sun, after it has been reflected and refracted by the vapor in the air; because the optical deception, upon which its existence depends, can only be caused by the light that strikes the eye.

If, then, we suppose that the rainbow is a sign to God; if God, as the scriptures assert, is to look upon and behold the bow in the clouds, he

must have eyes similar to the eyes of men. He must perceive objects by means of the light that is transmitted from them, and his eyes must be placed in our atmosphere in such a situation that they may receive the reflected and refracted light that causes the sensation of the rainbow in the minds of men. Let us suppose it to be said, that the image of the sun seen in a brook is a sign to some being; but, if that being had not eyes similar to those of man, and was not placed in a situation to look into the brook, the image could not exist to him, because he could not behold it; and, as it possessed no external existence, as a rock, or other solid, it might be said to exist to beings that could not see it, because it might be perceived by other faculties; but a thing that is only an optical delusion can exist only to beings endowed with the faculty of sight, and placed in a situation to behold it. The rainbow is wholly of this nature; and if it is to be a sign to God, God must possess the faculty of sight, and his eyes must be placed between the sun and the cloud in which the rainbow is seen.

But Christians tell us that God, being a spirit, hath not organs of sense like those of man, and that there is no locality in his existence. If this is true, the rainbow can neither exist to God, nor be a sign to him. It appears plain, that the writer of the book of Genesis believed that the rainbow had a tangible and local existence, and that it was placed so high in the firmament, of which he had previously spoken, that God could conveniently behold it from his celestial habitation. As this opinion has proved erroneous, the religion of its author ought to fall with it. Having, as I conceive, fully proved that the rainbow cannot be a sign to God, I shall now attempt to show (though the scriptures intimate no such thing) that it is not a sign to men, to assure them that the earth will not again be destroyed.

No one will pretend that, from the existence of the rainbow in the clouds, we can infer, by any reasoning *a priori*, without the Bible, that the earth will not again be destroyed by a deluge. If it is any sign in this case, it must be because God has made it a sign, by giving us a promise, and declaring the rainbow a sign of his adherence to it. But if we *have the promise of God*, we may depend on it with as full an assurance without the rainbow as with it. If we believe that God cannot violate his promise, no sign is necessary, for our security is already complete. If we doubt God's word, the rainbow can give us no assurance of his veracity. It can be no sign while the promise of God remains, because that promise is as certain without it as with it. But should the promise be lost, the bow could then be no sign, for we could no longer know that it was placed in the clouds to assure us that the world was not again to be destroyed. For whatever purpose, therefore, this bow was set in the clouds, it is evident that it does not and cannot serve as a sign to man. It is also evident that the writer of this book has given a false opinion in the passage I have quoted; and, consequently, that his pen was not inspired in writing that passage. But it is in this covenant between God and Noah, if any where, that we should expect the author to receive the aid of revelation. It was important that this covenant should be correctly given to the world; and it is in this covenant, if in any part of the work,

that God would give the writer his assistance. If this passage is not inspired, no part of the book of Genesis is inspired; and if Genesis is not inspired, the whole Bible must fall with it.

Calumny.—When the enemies of free inquiry find that they cannot rebut the facts and arguments opposed to their demoralizing systems, they uniformly resort to calumny and abuse. As a specimen of this sort of warfare, we republish the following *anonymous* communication, which appeared in the *New York Observer* of the 22d instant; a paper entirely devoted to Bible, tract, and missionary societies:

"PRECIOUS FRUITS OF DEISM.—Messrs. Editors—Not long since, I communicated for your paper a brief notice of the stated meetings of deists in this city. I am now able to tell you some of their effects. A grocer, who keeps his shop open regularly on the Sabbath for the sale of liquors, &c. requested his daughter, an interesting girl of sixteen, to attend him at these meetings, which she refused to do. She told him that nothing was exhibited there but blackguard ridicule, and that she would not be found in such company, (or to that effect.) Upon this, he commenced kicking her, and continued this brutal treatment till she had escaped from the house!! Comment is unnecessary."

We presume the editors of the *Observer*, as they profess to be impartial men, and advocates of truth, would not have given publicity to the above statement unless they had been satisfied as to its correctness. We, therefore, call on them to furnish us with the *name* of the person who is said to have conducted himself in a manner so contrary to propriety and moral feeling. Although we are of opinion that the story is a *fabrication*, got up for the purpose of creating an unfavorable impression as to the character of those who compose the *Free Press Association*; yet, if it could be shown that the occurrence took place as represented, we are confident the individual alluded to would be disowned by the Association. The following extract from the constitution of that body will show that we are well advised as to this matter:

"Any member of the Association, who shall be proved guilty of immoral or dishonorable conduct, or who shall act in such a manner as to bring discredit on the Association, shall be liable to forfeit his or her rights of membership."

That this law is not a *dead letter*, will appear obvious when we state that within these few weeks the name of one of the members of the *Free Press Association* was erased from the books, in consequence of its appearing, after a careful investigation, that he had conducted himself "in such a manner as to bring discredit on the Association."

Should the editors of the *New York Observer* refuse to furnish the information by which the truth of the statement they have published may be ascertained, we shall consider the whole a malicious invention, in which they have knowingly participated, if they are not its real authors.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Cardinal.—The cardinals were originally nothing more than deacons, to whom was entrusted the care of distributing the alms to the poor of the several quarters of Rome; and, as they held assemblies of the poor in certain churches of their several districts, they took the title of these

churches. They began to be called cardinals in the year 900, during the pontificate of St. Sylvester, by which appellation was meant the chief priest of a parish, and next in dignity to a bishop. This office grew more considerable afterward, and by small degrees arrived at its present height; in which it is the reward of such as have served his holiness well—even princes thinking it no diminution of their honor to become members of the college of cardinals. The cardinals compose the pope's council, and till the time of Urban VIII. were styled *most illustrious*; but by a decree of that pope in 1630, they had the title of *eminence* conferred upon them. At the creation of a new cardinal, the pope performs the ceremony of shutting and opening his mouth, which is done in a private consistory. The shutting his mouth implies the depriving him of the liberty of giving his opinion in congregations; and the opening his mouth, which is performed fifteen days after, signifies the taking off this restraint. However, if the pope happens to die during the time a cardinal's mouth is shut, he can neither give his voice in the election of a new pope, nor be himself advanced to that dignity. The cardinals are divided into six classes or orders, consisting of six bishops, fifty priests, and fourteen deacons, making in all seventy; which constitute the sacred college. The number of cardinal bishops has very seldom been changed; but that of the priests and deacons has varied at different times. The privileges of the cardinals are very great: they have an absolute power in the church during the vacancy of the holy see; they have a right to elect a new pope, and are the only persons on whom the choice can fall. Most of the grand offices in the court of Rome are filled by cardinals.

The Reformers.—Luther and Calvin, though the principal authors of the reformation, though zealous in the detection of error, though apparently sincere in their devotional humiliations, conspired against and violated truth. The former merely wished to be made a cardinal; the latter had fixed his hopes on the religious supremacy of the state of Geneva. To attain this, he procured the expulsion of Castalio, and persecuted Servetus to the grave. Luther, on the other hand, sacrificed the princess of Saxony to a lustful husband, and made the ignorant peasants of Germany believe that the devil, *in person*, had commissioned him to supersede private masses.

Martin Luther.—A rare specimen of ambition and inconsistency is found, says an eastern paper, in the last will of this fiery zealot: "I am known," says he, "in heaven, in earth, and hell, and possess consequences sufficient for this demand—that my single testimony be believed—seeing that God, of his fatherly compassion, hath intrusted to me, though *a damnable man and a miserable sinner*, the gospel of his son, and hath granted that I should be so true and faithful in it, that many in the world have received it by me as a doctor of the truth, while they condemn with detestation the bans of the pope, of Cæsar, of kings, of princes, and of priests; yea, of all devils. Why, then, may it not suffice for this disposal of a small estate, if the testimony of my hand be af-

fixed, and it can be said, Dr. Martin Luther, God's notary, and witness of his gospel, wrote these things."

Priestianity.—The clergy are an organized and disciplined body in every country. By the artful institutions of those who are at the head of the most numerous sect of Christians, care is taken that they have no endearing connexions of family—no bond of human fellowship, to weaken their devotedness to the sacerdotal corporation. They are the sons only of the catholic church, and they have no other interest than hers. Thus invested with sanctity of character, separated from human society, and assuming peculiar interests, their object, and the means which achieve it, must now be observed: Confession is the greatest of the means which they employ; and, even of itself, it is sufficient for every purpose they have in view. The people confess to the priests; the priests to the bishops; and so on upwards, till they come to the head of the system—who hears confession, but makes none! This is the absolute perfection of holy alliance and secret association. The subordinate agents know no more than is necessary to the information and the purpose of their superior; and the knowledge and the power of those who govern are reared securely on the ignorance, the feebleness, and devotedness of those who are governed. Here, then, is achieved, under the character of religion, that which, if undistinguished, would excite our scorn and our abhorrence.

Such a system of espionage is inconsistent with the slightest vestige of freedom. When the priest is master of the secret of every man's heart; when he can stamp all his deeds with the signet of heaven, or the brand of damnation, he is master of his actions as well as his thoughts. He, too, who deems himself securest from the influence of such a system, becomes its chiefest object. There is no man who has not a thousand associations, a thousand relations to society. In proportion, therefore, as Christianity spreads, and this domestic conspiracy is ramified, is every member of society surrounded by its snares, even in his utmost privacy, and his escape from it rendered impossible. Domestics, children, wives, are gradually proselytized; and toleration of their religious opinions is instantly made the plea for their and your subjugation. Confession thus places every private, and consequently every public interest at the mercy of the priesthood. The priesthood ever have surrendered, and ever will surrender, the people's interests to the civil power that may guarantee to them the exactions which maintain them in laziness and luxury.

TO OUR PATRONS.

As the second volume, which will complete the first year of the *Correspondent*, is drawing to a close, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) *in advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months *in advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those

who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if *city* subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year at *our office*, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

Lectures on Science.—The second regular *scientific* lecture before the *Free Press Association* will be delivered tomorrow, (Sunday,) the 30th instant, in the Temple of Arts, William street, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

Almanac.—Owing to the difficulty attending the mechanical part of the projected Almanac, which, it has been found, could not be executed in due time for its appearance this season, the work has been postponed.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York *compelling* the observance of a religious Sabbath—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

BIBLE RECORDS.

Mr. Editor—Is the Hebrew Bible an original record? If not, what proof can be given that it represents faithfully the original record?

If it be an original record, must it not be the oldest record still existing of past times? If so, what internal proofs does it offer of its antiquity; and what is the external evidence to prove the records of the Bible of greater antiquity than the records of Herodotus?

Is the Bible a true history written by inspired historians? If so, in what does it differ from a true history written by authors not inspired; Thucydides, for instance?

Does the Bible relate miraculous stories? If so, in what does it differ from any incredible history, where miracles are related; Plutarch, for example?

Does the Bible impart any information not attainable by man without the aid of revelation? If not, what proof does it give of its divine origin?

Are there any phenomena connected with a history written by inspiration, which cannot be explained upon principles applicable to histories written without inspiration? If not, what specific meaning can be attached to the words *divine inspiration*, as applied to any record of past events?

If the language of a prophecy be not applicable to that event alone which it is said to predict, can such event be truly said to be foretold by such prophecy?

If prophecy be interpreted not strictly to suit a particular event, may it not be interpreted with equal latitude to suit a similar event?

Is there a single prophecy in the Old Testament, that can be applied without some latitude to Christ alone? If not, what connection can be proved satisfactorily to exist between the Old and New Testament, as far as regards their supported characters of type and antitype?

Does the Bible detail a history of real events? If so, can any time or place be fixed upon, when and where those events could have happened?

If the history of the Jews contains fables similar to those which exist in the records of other nations, does not this similarity prove either a common origin, or that the fables of other nations have been derived from Jewish traditions, taking for granted their greater antiquity?

If other nations did borrow from the Jews, must not a connection be proved to have existed, either directly or indirectly, between those nations and the Jews?

Can any reason be assigned why such a connection must have existed? Or can the means be pointed out, by which such a connection could have existed between the Jews and other nations separated from each other by the natural barriers of savage, and the artificial impediments of civilized, life? If no such connection can be proved to have existed, must not the stories in the records of the Jews and of other nations have a common origin?

Is not the common origin of the history of every nation a collection of fables?

Are not the phenomena, connected with the history of man in his earliest state, the same in all countries?

Must not the fables, founded on those phenomena, be the same in all countries?

Do the Jewish fables differ in this respect from the fables of other nations? If not, what claim to greater veracity can the scriptures of the Jews assert over the scriptures of other nations?

If, on the other hand, the Jewish fables do differ, must not such difference of itself betray the greater ignorance of the inspired historian, to whom facts, of a universal nature and quite familiar to historians not inspired, were unknown?

Has any hypothesis yet been started to reconcile satisfactorily all the conflicting facts, and to solve all the intricate doubts connected with the history of the Bible? If not, can believers be convinced of the truth of the Bible?

If all the phenomena connected with the history of the Bible can be satisfactorily explained by one hypothesis alone, must not that solution be founded on truth?

If the first three chapters of Genesis be shown to be a translation from a fabulous history written in Greek, what becomes of the authenticity of the Mosaic records?

If the prophecies of the Bible be shown to be partly translated from a Greek original and partly modelled after them, at a period subsequent to the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, what becomes of that support of Christianity?

Is not the book of Deuteronomy, said to be written by Moses, an epitome of a more full history still extant, said to be written by the same Moses? If so, do the whole records of ancient literature furnish a single instance of an author thus abridging his own more full history?

Are not all epitomes made a considerable time after the appearance of the original work? If so, can any reason be assigned from the then state of society for a deviation from a uniform practice in the case of Moses?

As the book detailing the death of Moses must have been written after the event, and as the same book contains an epitome of the more full Mosaic history, is it not fair to infer that the historian of the death of Moses was the epitomizer of the history of Moses?

If the Mosaic records be thus stripped, at their commencement and end, of their claim to divine origin, can the remainder of the historical portions of the Old Testament urge a greater claim to a similar title?

Is not the fact of finding two accounts of the same events detailed in the Mosiac or Pseudo Mosiac records, keep in countenance by a similar fact in the case of a twofold history of the reigns of David and Solomon?

Does not this coincidence confirm the tradition obscurely handed down to the present period, that the Old Testament contains portions of two histories either written or compiled by two different persons and at two distinct periods?

Are not similar facts observable in the histories of every nation?

Are not similar facts observable in the history of Jesus?

Do not similar effects proceed from similar causes?

If, then, one history boasts to be God inspired, because it details ordinary and extraordinary events, may not every history of a similar character assert the same claim to a similar title?

Does the Bible pretend to give a knowledge of the acts and deeds of the Creator, with reference to a particular people? If so, can any reason be assigned for such peculiar preference?

Is there any thing in the physical or moral qualities of the Jewish people, as depicted in their history, favorable to the tradition that they were the only fit instruments for the preservation of a particular religious tenet, relating to the existence of The One?

If the physical or moral qualities of that people were not favorable, was the geographical position of Judea favorable for the preservation of the doctrine of monotheism?

If the doctrine of monotheism be proved to involve in itself ideas incompatible with the idea of a creator, can that doctrine be true?

If that doctrine be proved to be not true, can God be supposed to have chosen a people for the express purpose of preserving the knowledge of a lie?

If, on the other hand, the doctrine cannot be proved to be false, would God have sent his only son and his son's disciples to teach the Jews first and then the Gentiles that the Creator was false to the cause of truth, by first instituting the worship of The One, then of The Two, lastly of The Three?

Does not unprejudiced reason confess the inability of man to know any thing of the Creator but by his acts?

Do not the acts of the Creator follow universal laws? If so, can the Creator be supposed to have given particular revelations to favored nations and individuals?

Granting that man is able to acquire positive ideas of the attributes and purposes of the Creator, revealed by words and deeds, are not all the arguments, in favor of the existence of one, two, and three creative beings, far more intelligible in the original Bibles of the pagan philosophers, than in those of the penmen of an hybrid Testament, half Jew, half Christian? If so, can a reason be assigned for the necessity of revelations, as asserted by Bible believers?

Lastly. If no reason can be assigned for the necessity of revelations, can any reason be assigned for the performance of an act not necessary on the part of the Creator?

ARISTIDES.

REASON VERSUS REVELATION.

Mr. Editor—On or about the year 1710, a Swedish missionary had a meeting with some Indians at Canastota, in Pennsylvania, at which, an interpreter being present, he delivered a discourse on original sin, the necessity of a mediator, &c.; and, by various arguments, endeavored to persuade them to embrace the Christian religion. In answer to which, one of the Indian chiefs delivered the following speech; which, as well as his own, the missionary published in Latin on his return to Sweden; and dedicated them to the university of Upsal; desiring them, at the same time, that they would furnish him with arguments, to confute such strong reasoning of the Indians.

The Indian's speech translated from the Latin is as follows:

Since the object of his (the missionary's) errand is to persuade us to embrace a new doctrine, it may not be amiss, before we offer the reasons why we cannot comply with his request, to acquaint him with the grounds and principles of that religion which he would have us to abandon. Our forefathers were under a strong persuasion, as we are, that those who act well in this life shall be rewarded in the next, according to the degree of their virtue; and, on the other hand, that those who do wickedly here will undergo such punishments hereafter as are proportionate to their crimes. This hath been constantly acknowledged for a truth, through every successive generation of our ancestors; nor could it have taken its rise from fables; for human fiction, however artfully and plausibly contrived, can never gain credit long, among any people where free inquiry is allowed, which was never denied by our ancestors, who, on the contrary, thought it the sacred, invaluable, and natural right of every man, to examine and judge for himself; therefore, we think it evident, that our notions concerning future rewards and punishments were either revealed immediately from heaven to some of our forefathers, and from them descended to us; or, were implanted in each of us at our creation by the creator of all things.

Whatever the method might have been whereby God hath been pleased to make known to us his will, and to give us the knowledge of our duty, 'tis still in our sense a divine revelation. Now we desire to propose to him a few questions: does he believe, that our forefathers, who were eminent for their piety, constant and warm in the pursuit of virtue, hoping thereby to merit everlasting happiness, were all damned? Does he think, that we, who are their zealous imitators in good works, and influenced by the same motives as they were, earnestly endeavoring, by the greatest circumspection, to tread in the paths of integrity, are in a state of damnation? If these are his sentiments, they are surely as impious as they are bold and daring. In the next place, we beg that he would explain himself more particularly concerning the revelation he talks of: if he admits no other than what is contained in his written book, the contrary is evident from what has been shown before; but if he says, "God hath revealed himself to us, but not sufficiently for our salvation," then we ask to what purpose should he have revealed to us in any degree? It is clear, that a revelation, insufficient to save, cannot put us in a better condition than we should be without any revelation at all.

We cannot conceive that God should point out to us the end we ought to aim at, without opening to us the way to arrive at that end. But supposing our understandings to be so far illuminated as to know it to be our duty to please God, who yet hath left us under an incapacity of doing it; will this missionary conclude that we shall all be damned? Will he take upon himself to pronounce against us for not doing those things, which he even acknowledges are impossible for us to do? It is our opinion that every man is possessed of sufficient knowledge for his own salvation. The Almighty (for any thing known to the contrary) might have communicated himself to different races of people, in different manners: some say, they have the will of God in writing; be it so, their revelation has no advantage over ours, since both must be equally sufficient to save, or the end of revelation would be frustrated: besides, if they be both true, they must be the same in substance; and the difference only lies in the mode of communication. He tells us there are many precepts in his written revelation, of which we are entirely ignorant. But the written commands can only be designed for those who have the writings. They cannot regard us. Had the Almighty thought as much knowledge necessary to our salvation, his goodness would not so long have deferred the communication of it to us; and to say that in a matter so necessary he would not at one and the same time equally reveal himself to all mankind, is nothing less than an absolute denial of his omnipotence. Without doubt, he could make his will manifest, without any written book, or the assistance of any thing human whatever.

We shall, in the next place, consider the arguments which arise from a consideration of providence. If we are the work of God, (which, I presume, will not be denied,) it follows from thence that we are under the care and protection of God; for, it cannot be supposed that the Deity would abandon his creatures, and be utterly regardless of their welfare. Then, to say that the Almighty hath permitted us to remain in fatal error, through so many ages, is to represent him as a tyrant! How is it consistent with his justice to force life upon a race of beings without their consent, and damn them eternally, without ever opening to them a door of salvation? Our conception of the gracious God is more noble, and we think that those who do otherwise do little less than blaspheme. Again, 'tis through the care and goodness of the Almighty, that, from the beginning of time, through many generations to this day, our names have been preserved. By the same care we now enjoy our lives, and are furnished with the necessary means of preserving them. But all these things are trifling compared with our salvation; therefore, since God hath been so careful for us in matters of little consequence, it would be absurd to affirm that he has neglected us in a case of the greatest importance. Admit that he hath forsaken us, yet it would not have been without a just cause. Let us suppose that a crime was committed by our ancestors, like to that which we are told was committed by another race of people; in such a case, God would certainly punish the criminal, but would not involve us, who are innocent, in this guilt; those who think otherwise, must take the Almighty to be a very whimsical, ill-natured being.

Once more, are the Christians more virtuous, or rather, are they not more vicious than we are? If so, how came it to pass, that they are

the objects of God's beneficence, while we are neglected? Does the Deity confer his favors without reason, and with so much partiality? In a word, we find the Christians much more depraved in their morals than ourselves; and we judge of their doctrine by the badness of their lives.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1827.

THE MAHOMETANS.

In looking over the editorial remarks of the different newspapers published in this city, on the recent intelligence from Greece, I have observed that some of them have resorted to the usual cant of attributing the destruction of the Turkish navy to the *interposition of divine providence*. The pious editor of the *Daily Advertiser*, in particular, after indulging in a strain of the most virulent abuse against the Mahometans—calling them infidels, barbarians, monsters, wretches, &c., tells his readers—"It appears *now* the will of providence that an end shall be put to the unrestrained devastations of the followers of the prophet."

It is manifest from the language of this fanatical writer, that the being who is supposed by him to govern the universe, and to regulate the actions and affairs of mortals, could have prevented all the misery and wretchedness which the Greeks have endured, if he had been disposed to interpose in their behalf. That he did not interpose till *now*—till all hopes of deliverance had almost become extinct, proves him to be a being influenced by malignant passions, and who takes delight in beholding the sufferings of the oppressed. If it was his "will" at this late period—after the "brutal power" had stained its hands with the blood of patriots, of helpless females, and of tender babes—to afford the survivors relief, it is impossible to consider him either good or benevolent. Could he not have prevented these murderous deeds altogether? The power that can do good, and will not, is an evil power. The power which permits vice to predominate over virtue, itself being capable of controlling the evil, is an evil power. These, if not proofs, strongly imply that the thing called providence is altogether a fiction.

But why call the Turks barbarians and infidels? In massacring the Greeks, they have done no more than what the Christians have done to each other? Has the cross been less the signal for shedding blood than the crescent? Was it by the sword of Mahometans or of Christians that whole nations were butchered on the discovery of the continent we now inhabit? Which of them perpetrated the sanguinary crimes of a St. Bartholomew's day—kindled the fires of Smithfield—instigated the extermination of the Scottish covenanters—piled up the faggots of an *auto da fe*—established the Spanish inquisition, by which twelve millions of human beings were immolated? Were they the followers of Mahomet, or of the "meek and lowly Jesus," who wanted in these scenes of blood, brutal lust, and avarice?

The fact is, very little is known of the Mahometans but what has been communicated by the priests, who visited Turkey for the purpose of enlarging the influence of the Roman pontiff; and who, in consequence of

not meeting with the success they had anticipated, sought revenge in promulgating the most shameful calumnies and base fabrications respecting the whole population of the country. On the credit of such testimony as this, things have been reported of Mahomet and his followers, not only false, but contrary to reason; which, notwithstanding, are now received as truths by many who are not always disposed to adopt opinions without examination.

As to Mahomet himself, nothing is more common than the opinion that he was an ignorant impostor; that his religion was a mixture of Judaism and heresy; and that it was embraced only by robbers—by men who neither acknowledged God nor justice. The falsehood of these opinions is evident from La Croze's *Historical Dissertations*, in which that writer (v. 1, p. 38) says, that "Mahomet had very fine natural parts. He was agreeable, polite, and obliging, and fit to converse with all mankind."

The *Alcoran*, an original copy of which is possessed by few Christians, is thus spoken of by the marquis D'Argens: "It contains excellent things; deserves the esteem of good men, and is useful for the correction of manners."

From the way in which the Turks are generally spoken of, it might be supposed that their religious opinions are altogether drawn from the *Alcoran*, and that there is no resemblance whatever between these opinions and those entertained by Christians—in fact, that they are entirely different. This, however, is not the case; for it appears by professor Reiland's account of Mahometanism that they believe the Pentateuch, the psalms of David, and the gospel of Jesus, were given by God, as well as the *Alcoran*. This fact is also mentioned in Jacob Ben Sidi Ali's *Exposition of the Faith of the Sunnites*; in Maracci's *Prodromus to the Alcoran*; and by the English clergyman Dr. Smith, in his "remarks upon the manners, religion, and government of the Turks."

Dumont, who resided for some years at Smyrna, which gave him an opportunity of obtaining correct information as to the religious tenets of the Mahometans, says that they profess to believe in Jesus Christ, whom they call the breath of God; acknowledging that he was conceived by divine influence, as represented in the gospels received by Christians; that, having altered and reformed the law, this incurred the hatred of the Jews, who sought to put him to death, and hired the traitor Judas to betray him; but when he came to the garden of olives, they were seized with so strange an illusion, that they crucified Judas instead of his master, who was in the mean time carried to heaven. They believe, also, that he will come again to judge the world at the last day; but that he will first reign on the earth, and marry, and have children. They affirm that he was a holy man and a chosen vessel, but they deny the trinity; saying that such an opinion would absolutely destroy the unity of that sovereign being without which he could not be God.

Among the thousand tales which the Christian priests have promulgated respecting the doctrines of Mahomet, is the one which makes him exclude the female sex from heaven. Abulfeda relates that an old woman one day importuned him to tell her what she must do to get into paradise. "My good lady," said the prophet, "paradise is not

for old women." The good woman began to weep; but he consoled her by saying, "There will be no old women there, because they will become young again." This doctrine is amply confirmed in the 54th chapter of the Koran. It would be as easy to expose all the other silly things said of Mahomet by the priesthood.

This extraordinary man has been accused of *intolerance*. In whatever light that part of his conduct may be viewed where he is represented as carrying a sword in one hand and the Alcoran in the other, it is certain that the sentiments which he uttered had nothing in them of an intolerant or illiberal nature. "Whosoever (said he) lives innocently, and does justice, whether he be a Christian, Jew, or pagan, shall be saved, as well as my disciples." His calumniators would and do say, that whether we live justly and virtuously or not, if we do not *believe* in the doctrines which they teach, and which they admit it is impossible to understand, we shall *not* be saved. On which side the charge of intolerance lies, we can be at no loss to decide.

The *moral* precepts of the Alcoran will bear a comparison, at any time, with those of Christianity. "That charity," says D'Argens, "which is so strongly recommended in their books, and the pardon of their enemies, are two points which include the most refined morality. But what they are most to be commended for is, that they not only believe, but *practise*, these maxims. Their kindness to the poor is often beforehand with their necessities. There are few Turks but give considerable alms in their lifetime, which are applied to the relief of the unfortunate. The caravanseras, the wells, the fountains built upon the road, for the convenience of pilgrims and poor travellers, of *what religion soever they be*, are everlasting monuments of the virtue of the Mahometans. Their compassion for the miserable extends still farther: they have hospitals for incurables, for those that are maimed, and for lunatics. There are few people who have a stricter regard to their promises; inasmuch that they are slaves to their words; and the difference of religion does not serve them as a pretext to deceive those with whom they have any worldly dealings. The respect which the Mahometans pay to their parents is worthy of praise. At Constantinople, few of those children are to be seen that make nature blush, which is so common in Christian countries. The Tartars and the Arabians are still more zealous observers of filial obedience. But what I admire them most for is their aversion to calumny. They are ignorant of the art of poisoning their discourses: their conversation is not made up of slander, nor filled with scandalous tales."

This testimony of one of the most celebrated writers who flourished in the last century, might be corroborated by numerous other respectable authors. But there can be no doubt that the followers of Mahomet are generally the most correct in their dealings, the most faithful in their engagements, and the strictest in the discharge of the moral duties, of any people on the earth. It is only in those Mahometan countries where priestcraft has the ascendancy, that the morals of the people are corrupt. But as on this, as on all other subjects, facts and experience are better calculated to lead to a correct decision than abstract reasoning, let us try the religion of Mahomet on the authority of "Golbery's Travels in

Africa," a late publication, the author of which appears free from any leaning toward Islamism :

This writer, speaking of the Moors of Zara, says "they are very zealous Mahometans; but, as superstition is ever the attendant of a foul conscience and systematic depravity, they are in consequence ridiculously superstitious. Their priests, whom they call maraboutts, and who form a very important tribe among them, support this deplorable weakness. These men are very vicious, corrupt, inhuman, cruel, and ferocious—crafty and perfidious—equally cowardly and cruel—who possess no moral principle—who know no right either natural or political, and who follow no other impulse than what their self interest and their passions dictate. Their manners are barbarous, corrupted, and disgusting."

Here is a picture of a very religious people under the guidance of priests. Let us now see what the same writer says respecting another and a very different nation in Africa, who have no priests, nor religious worship of any kind:

"One of the principles of their morality is to do unto others as they would be done by. They never plunder or rob among themselves. They never make slaves; nor has it ever been known that a Bamboukain became the captive of his countryman, or was sold by him. They mutually assist each other, and keep their promise inviolable. They practice hospitality with the utmost pleasure and alacrity; and, indeed, they possess this virtue in an eminent degree: it is particularly toward the blacks, with a preference for Mahometan negroes, that they exercise it with zeal: they do not like the whites, but fear and distrust them; and hence their conduct toward them is very different from that which they show toward the negroes. In the whole country of Bambouk, a black will never be found to want necessities: if he arrives naked and destitute among those hospitable people, they in an instant procure him clothing. A strange negro enters the first house he meets with in his road, and salutes the master: if it be at the hour of repast, he is placed at his side, and eats in the same bowl: every one treats him with cordiality; and when the meal is finished, the stranger rises, and addresses the host with a sentence to the following effect: I thank thee, brother; may Mahomet bless thee, and may God prosper thee. With these words a strange black may travel through the whole of Bambouk, without wanting any thing, and meeting every where with a favorable reception.

"A very singular circumstance, which distinguishes the Maudings of Bambouk from their original stamina, is, that they have no maraboutts or priests, and they will not suffer them to exist in their country. They, however, had these priests at the time of conquering the country, but they conspired against the chiefs of the nation: they wished to possess themselves of the sovereign authority, to subjugate the Bamboukains, and to render themselves masters of the gold mines. This conspiracy was discovered, and all the maraboutts were put to death. From this period, these priests were not only expelled from Bambouk, but they would not suffer a Mahometan priest to enter the territory."

It is true, these enemies of the priesthood entertain some foolish and superstitious notions about a devil, who they believe fabricates gold in the bowels of the earth. They say that he "keeps a very good table, and

gives his workmen plenty of food; and that when they can obtain some confidential place from him, they live in high style, and their situation is in every respect enviable." But ridiculous as this may appear, the belief of the Christians is equally so, and much more gloomy and horrible; for they imagine the devil keeps a very bad table, affording only one solitary dish of "fire and brimstone" for his wretched slaves.

Although no one whose mind is freed from the fetters of superstition can view the destruction of the Turkish fleet as an act of divine power, there is sufficient reason for congratulation on an event that promises to lead to the emancipation of the Greeks from the galling bondage under which they have so long remained. Their political independence once established, they will have abundant opportunities of cultivating their minds by useful studies. Hitherto their abject situation rendered them a prey to the rapacity of their own priesthood, who, like the priesthood in all countries, find it much easier to plunder and to govern the ignorant than the intelligent.

The introduction of our modern systems of education among a people who have displayed so ardent a love for liberty as the Greeks have done, cannot fail to produce a powerful effect. As knowledge increases, superstition will decrease; and if we judge from the rapid progress which liberal principles have made within these few years, we may reasonably hope that the period is not far distant when the bulk of mankind will be withdrawn from the influence of priestcraft and superstition. Only forty years since, a scientific man, who merely advocated the first step to liberality of opinion—unitarianism—had his house demolished, in England, and was driven from his native country by a religious mob. Now, deism is advocated there before respectable audiences, and atheistical works published as openly as religious tracts. Although philosophy cannot be expected to progress like superstition, which is nourished by ignorance, its growth promises permanency. Sects of religion have often risen very rapidly: the Mahometan faith had its millions of supporters during the first century of its propagation. Like annual plants, religions spring up at one season and bear fruit, and the next season die. Philosophy, on the other hand, may be likened to the sturdy oak, the growth of which is imperceptible, but which remains after hundreds of generations of the short lived things that surround it have been consigned to the tomb.

VOLNEY'S RUINS; OR, MEDITATION ON THE REVOLUTIONS OF EMPIRES.

The superior merits of this work are too well known to require commendation; but it is not generally known that there are in circulation three English translations of it, varying very materially in regard to faithfulness and elegance of diction. And as it is desirable that the admirers of this celebrated writer should possess the best translation, I insert the following samples for their information.

The French Edition.

INVOCATION.

Je vous salue, ruines solitaires, tombeaux saints, murs silencieux! C'est vous que j'invoque: c'est à vous que j'adresse ma prière. Oui! tandis que votre aspect repousse

d'un secret effroi les regards du vulgaire, mon cœur trouve à vous contempler le charme des sentimens profonds et des hautes pensées. Combien d'utiles leçons de réflexions touchantes ou fortes n'offrez-vous pas à l'esprit qui sait vous consulter! C'est vous qui, lorsque la terre entière asservie, se taisait devant les tyrans, proclamiez déjà les vérités qu'ils détestent, et qui, confondant la dépouille des rois avec celle du dernier esclave, attaquiez le saint dogme de l'ÉGALITÉ. C'est dans votre enceinte, qu'innant solitaire de la LIBERTÉ, j'ai vu m'apparaître son génie, non tel que se le peint un vulgaire insensé, armé de torches et de poignards, mais sous l'aspect auguste de la justice, tenant en ses mains les balances sacrées ou se pèsent les actions des mortels aux portes de l'éternité.

O tombeaux! que vous possédez de vertus! vous épouvantez les tyrans; vous empoisonnez d'une terreur secrète leurs jouissances impies; ils fuient votre incorruptible aspect, et les lâches portent loin de vous l'orgueil de leurs palais.

Paris Translation, now published in this city, in duodecimo and octavo.

INVOCATION.

HAIL solitary ruins! holy sepulchres, and silent walls! you I invoke; to you I address my prayer. While your aspect averts, with secret terror, the vulgar regard, it excites in my heart, the charm of delicious sentiments, sublime contemplations. What useful lessons! what affecting and profound reflections you suggest to him who knows how to consult you. When the whole earth in chains and silence, bowed the neck before its tyrants, you had already proclaimed the truths which they abhor, and confounding the dust of the king with that of the meanest slave, had announced to man the sacred dogma of EQUALITY! Within your pale, in solitary adoration of LIBERTY, I saw her Genius arise from the mansion of the dead; not such as she is painted by the impassioned multitude, armed with fire and sword, but under the august aspect of Justice, poising in her hand the sacred balance, wherein are weighed the actions of men at the gates of eternity.

O Tombs! what virtues are yours! you appal the tyrant's heart, and poison with secret alarm his impious joys; he flies, with coward step, your incorruptible aspect, and erects afar his throne of insolence.

London Translation.

INVOCATION.

Solitary ruins, sacred tombs, ye mouldering and silent walls, all hail! To you I address my invocation. While the vulgar shrink from your aspect with secret terror, my heart finds in the contemplation a thousand delicious sentiments, a thousand admirable recollections. Pregnant, I may truly call you, with useful lessons, with pathetic and irresistible advice to the man who knows how to consult you. A while ago the whole world bowed the neck in silence before the tyrants that oppressed it; and yet in that hopeless moment you already proclaimed the truths that tyrants hold in abhorrence: mixing the dust of the proudest Kings with that of the meanest slaves, you called upon us to contemplate this example of EQUALITY. From your caverns, whither the nursing and anxious love of LIBERTY led me, I saw escape its venerable shade, and with unexpected felicity, direct its flight and marshal my steps the way to renovated France.

Tombs! what virtues and potency do you exhibit! Tyrants tremble at your aspect—you poison with secret alarm their impious pleasures—they turn from you with impatience, and, coward like, endeavour to forget you amid the sumptuousness of their palaces.

Philadelphia Translation.

INVOCATION.

Hail, ye solitary ruins, ye sacred tombs, and silent walls! 'Tis your auspicious aid that I invoke, 'tis to you my soul, wrapt in meditation, pours forth its prayer! What though the profane and vulgar mind shrinks with dismay from your august and awe-inspiring aspect, to me ye unfold the sublime charms of contemplation and sentiment, and offer to my senses the luxury of a thousand delicious and enchanting thoughts! How sumptuous the feast to a being that has a taste to relish, and an understanding to consult you! What rich and noble admonitions, what exquisite and pathetic lessons do you read to a heart that is susceptible of exalted feelings! When oppressed humanity bent in timid silence throughout the globe beneath the galling yoke of slavery, it was you that proclaimed aloud the birthright of those truths which tyrants tremble at while they detect, and which by sinking the loftiest head of the proudest potentate, with all his boasted pageantry, to the level of mortality with his meanest slave, confirmed and ratified by your unerring testimony the sacred and immortal doctrine of EQUALITY.

Musing within the precincts of your inviting scenes of philosophic solitude, whither the insatiate love of true-born LIBERTY had led me, I beheld her genius ascending, not in the spurious character and habit of a blood-thirsty Fury armed with daggers and instruments of murder, and followed by a frantic and intoxicated multitude, but under the placid and chaste

aspect of justice, holding with a pure and unallied hand the sacred scales in which the actions of mortals are weighed on the brink of eternity.

O ye tombs and emblematic images of death! How superlative is your power, how irresistible your influence! Your presence appals and chills the souls of tyrants with electric horror and remorse: the very remembrance of you haunts their minds like a ghastly spectre in the midst of their voluptuous enjoyments, and the terror you inspire plants thorns in all their thoughts, and poisons their impious pleasures into pains.

The first translation was made and published in London soon after the appearance of the work in French, which I perceive by a late edition, is still adopted without alteration. Mr. Volney, when in this country, in 1797, expressed his disapprobation of this translation, alleging that the translator must have been overawed by the government or clergy from rendering his ideas faithfully; and accordingly an English gentleman then in Philadelphia, volunteered to correct this edition. But it seems that by his endeavours to give the true and full meaning of the author with great precision, he has so overloaded his composition with an exuberance of words, as in a great measure to dissipate the simple elegance and sublimity of the original. Mr. Volney, when he became better acquainted with the English language, perceived this defect; and, with the aid of our countryman, Joel Barlow, made and published in Paris, a new, correct, and elegant translation. Of the Philadelphia translation, besides the edition printed there, there have unfortunately been three others, one in New-York, one in Albany, and another in Exeter, New-Hampshire; and I am told, although I have not seen the edition, that it has lately been stereotyped in Philadelphia.

Messrs. Dixon & Sickels, printers and publishers in New-York, have just issued a neat edition, in duodecimo, copied from the Paris translation, (not printed before in this country,) and embellished with plates; containing the Law of Nature, a Biographical notice of Volney, and a list of his works. A few copies have been printed in octavo, upon superfine paper, which makes a splendid volume.

* * * The work is for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*. Octavo copy, \$2; duodecimo, \$1; fine do., \$1 25.

MISCELLANEOUS.

An Infernal Banquet.—We copy the following curious article from "Faustus; his Life, Death, and Descent into Hell," a translation of which from the German has lately appeared in London: Already the monstrous vaults of hell resounded with the fiendish populace, while myriads seated themselves upon the scorched ground. The princes then stepped forth, and commanded silence to the multitude, whilst Satan heard the intelligence brought by his envoys from the upper world. The devils obeyed, and a deathlike stillness prevailed amid the thick misty darkness, interrupted only by the groans of the damned. In the mean time, the shades of the fiends—shades, who are neither worthy of happiness nor damnation—prepared the immeasurable tables for the banquet, and they deserved to be under the thralldom of such a task. When they were yet in flesh and blood, and ate the fruits of the earth, they were of that

equitocal kind, who seem the friends of all men, and yet are the friends of none; whose tongues continually prattle of the noble precepts of virtue, which they feel not in their hearts; who only abstain from evil, because it is accompanied by danger, and from doing good, because it requires courage and self denial; who traffic with religion, and, like avaricious Jews, lay out their capital at interest, for the purpose of securing a comfortable birth for their miserable souls; and who worship God from fear, and tremble before him like slaves.

The devils, who, to say the truth, are no better masters than the Polish, Livonian, and Hungarian nobility, drove them about in hell at a furious rate. Others were sweating in the infernal kitchen, and cooking the meal for their haughty lords; an unpleasant service for a soul, which had once supported its own human body by eating and drinking. For, although the devils originally neither ate nor drank, yet they have learned from men the custom of celebrating every solemnity by means of the glass and platter, and, on such occasions, they feast on souls. The general of each legion (for hell is arranged on a military footing, and in this respect resembles every despotic government, or rather every despotic government in this respect resembles hell) chooses a certain number of damned souls as food for his subalterns. These are delivered over to the slaves, who stew, broil, and baste them with hellish sauce. It frequently happens that these wretches have to stick their own wives, daughters, fathers, sons, or brothers, upon the spits, and to keep up the purgatorial fire beneath them; a truly tragic and horrible employment, rendered yet more so, since their overseer, a capricious devil, like all understrappers to great lords, stands behind them with a whip, in order to expedite the work. On the present occasion, two popes, a conqueror, a celebrated philosopher, and a recently canonized saint, were intended to feast the palates of Satan, his viziers, and his favorites. Abundance of fresh victuals had just arrived for the common people. The pope had a little time before set by the ears two armies of French, Italians, Spaniards, and Germans, in order to fish up in the tumult certain districts, to add to the patrimony of St. Peter. They fought like heroes, and fell by thousands into hell. What happiness would it be for the souls, intended for these devilish repasts, if they were thereby to find an end to their torments; but no sooner are they swallowed, digested, and returned peacemeal into the pools of hell, than they are regenerated, and arise to become the patients of new suffering.

Grand Juries.—As a sample of the convenient operation of the grand jury system, in as far as it relieves justices from uneasiness concerning rash committals, a London paper states a case which occurred in a midland county some few months since. A boy finding a sack close to the highway, carried it home: the boy's father, finding out to whom it belonged, advised the son to take it back the next day, lest the being possessed of another person's property might get him into some trouble. Before there was time to comply with this advice, the owner of the sack claimed and received his property back. Three months after this incident, the owner of the sack, who was a member of an association for the protection of property by prosecuting for offences, found himself

called on by its regulations to prosecute. The boy was accordingly taken before a *parson* justice of that district, who made out his commitment, for felony, to the county gaol. In that county gaol was he doomed to remain six or seven weeks, under circumstances which could scarcely fail of rendering him vicious and idle. He was destined, by this functionary of the laws, to spend six weeks in prison. During the latter part of his confinement, he would have been locked up with eight felons every night, in a cell containing three beds. That this boy was spared such injuries, arose from the interference of an individual, who procured the lad to be bailed, to appear at the ensuing assizes. In due time, the grand jury being assembled, the case in question was brought forward, and, as might have been predicted, the bill was rejected.

The Jesuits.—It appears evident that the jesuits are growing bolder and bolder every day in France. Two professors of Paris, M. Royer Collard and M. Guizot, are interdicted from lecturing at the Sorbonne, a pretty significant hint to the other professors, that they can only hope to hold their situations by the tenure of subserviency to the priesthood. M. Royer Collard, M. Guizot, and M. Cousin are on the index of the Propaganda Ultramontain, and consequently the lectures of these professors shall not be delivered this year, as they were not delivered last, and will not be delivered, if things continue as at present, next year. One of the grand vicars of the bishop of Angers has sent such an unequivocal threat of suppression to the master of a school for mutual instruction, that the latter thought proper to shut up the school, fearing to incur the displeasure of his ecclesiastical superiors. The *Courier Francais* emphatically says, "Tolerance is now proscribed under the new word of 'tolerantismus,' as the doctrines of Bossuet are proscribed as heresy."

Talisman.—Whence is the word "talisman" derived? Johnson confesses he does not know. It is pretty certain it can have no connection with the Greek *homonym*, which he has put in juxta position with it, making a guess to the eye which answers to but one, and that the most deceptive criterion which the etymologist employs. It is of oriental origin, conveyed to us through the tales of Arabian enchantment, and taken originally from Persia, where there is a mountain called *Talesme*, which is said to be enchanted. This mountain is arid and steep, and "appears to alter its form according to the points from which it is seen." This illusory appearance is of the same class as the *mirage*, and results in an analogous manner from the motion of the black sand with which it is covered. Superstition may easily have borrowed a name from so singular a phenomenon.

Universal Explanation of the Principles of Nature.—M. Azais, the author of several philosophical works, has just published at Paris two volumes under the above title. The following is a compendium of his system. The universe is full of beings. These beings incessantly succeed one another, and are renewed, by the action of a first cause, which is God. This action operates by motion, which forms and decomposes every thing that exists; and motion must therefore be con-

sidered as the second universal cause. Matter is the subject of the action of this second cause. Every material being has an incessant tendency to develope or dilate itself, which constitutes expansion. But, as in dilating without experiencing any external resistance, every body would soon end in being dissolved and destroyed, there must be to prevent that effect a force of compression, which emanates from other bodies and on the same principle. Thus, that which is expansive or destructive force on the part of one material being, is compressive or conservative force on the part of the beings opposed to it; and *vice versa*. All bodies thus act eternally the one upon the other, producing the equilibrium of worlds, and regulating the minutest details in any of them. According to M. Axis, this expansive and this compressive force are equally operative in morals.

Bigotry.—A late traveller in Russia states, that while passing from Petersburg to Moscow, “we reached the small district town of Krestzi, and stopping in the suburb, close to the post house, we were shown into a good looking habitation, on the opposite side of the street. The peasant to whom it belonged was absent, but the reception we met with from his wife convinced us that we should not have been more welcome had he been at home. With the whole population of the suburb, amounting to upwards of 1,000 souls, the family consisted of Staroværtzi, or dissenters of the old faith, the rigidity of whose principles operates as powerfully on their intercourse with all whom they consider to be members of the orthodox Greek church, as the contracted spirit of the ancient Jews did in preventing them from having any ‘dealings with the Samaritans.’ One of our number happening to have metal buttons on his travelling coat, and another having a tobacco pipe in his hand, the prejudices of the mistress of the house were alarmed to such a degree, that all the arguments we could use were insufficient to prevail on her to make ready some dinner for us. When compelled to do any service of this kind to such as are not of their own sect, they consider themselves bound to destroy the utensils used on the occasions; to prevent which loss, those who are more exposed to the intrusion of strangers, generally keep a set of profane vessels for the purpose. As the proprietor of the house we had entered appeared to be in affluent circumstances, it is not improbable that he might have furnished it with something of the kind; but the tobacco pipe proved an insuperable obstacle to their use. So great, too, is the aversion of this people to snuff, that if a box happen to have been laid on a table belonging to them, the part on which it lay must be planed out before it can be appropriated to any further use.”

TO OUR PATRONS.

As two numbers more will complete the first year of the publication of the *Correspondent*, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) *in advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months *in advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several in-

stances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if *city* subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year at *our office*, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bellingbrooke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

Lectures on Science.—The third regular scientific lecture before the *Free Press Association* will be delivered on Sunday, the 13th instant, in the Temple of Arts, William street, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

Paine's Theological Works, complete, 8vo., bound and gilt—\$2; bds. \$1.50.

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.CORRESPONDENCE.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Mr. Editor—In the revolution to acquire mental freedom, we ought to select such parts of our old institutions as are useful; and not, in our zeal to destroy the evil of priestcraft, throw away that which is really valuable in life. Some well written essays have appeared in the *Correspondent*, endeavoring to do away the belief in the immortality of the soul, which I cannot unite with, because I am not able to see the benefit that will arise to society if the opinion should be established. Happiness is the sole object or end of all human exertions; and to be happy, and continue so, is a desire implanted in us by the author of our existence. This idea was never given us by the priests, for we feel it and know it by our consciousness; and it is not wonderful that we should desire futurity, for futurity is nothing but protracted existence; and when we recollect that immortal happiness is a portion the priests have set apart for themselves, it is good reason why we should not destroy it, for depend upon it they are good judges of good things. They have practised selecting what is desirable to have and enjoy; and if there was any alloy in this, they would have long ago made the discovery. There cannot be a better general rule made in breaking down priestcraft (that most detestable contrivance of all human invention) than to preserve all such parts as they have selected for their own dear selves—provided this violates no moral obligation. As for hell in a future life, every body hates it, and I want it destroyed root and branch, and fire used for steam and other purposes; for nothing but the pure essence of religious fanaticism could ever have invented such a roaster as the priests tell us it is, who are the only class of people that pretend to have a knowledge of its internal properties.

It may be said, that there are no reasons to found a belief of the immortality of the soul upon. To this I answer, that the belief is already founded, and all we have to do is to let it alone. It will then be ready for the use of those who can draw resources from it: for it cannot be urged in favor of destroying the belief "that it is better in all cases to know the truth;" because those who endeavor to establish the disbelief are as ignorant of what the truth is on the subject as those who advocate it.

If the belief in future happiness has an injurious effect on society, it may be right to endeavor to eradicate it; but this, I apprehend, is not the fact. The idea of a redeemer, who has power to reward and punish beyond the grave, is a very injurious doctrine. With such a long credit, mankind have habituated themselves to draw largely on the stock of

mercy and redemption, and, generally, harbored the opinion that they themselves would eventually be part of the favored few; for the power of this imaginary quality of redemption has been considered equal to the salvation of any man, without regard to the enormity of his crimes. Thus persons are induced to abandon the true means of salvation (which is a daily practise of good and benevolent actions) for the idle tales of ignorant and designing priests. But a belief in future happiness, embracing the present moment, and extending to infinity of duration, is founded on the principles of our nature, and is a rational resource of enjoyment when the comforts and pleasures of this life are passing away. It is particularly calculated to sooth the minds of those who are worn down by poverty and affliction in the last stages of existence.

As for everlasting punishment, it is not only repugnant to every feeling of humanity, but it is inconsistent with the laws of Nature. Punishment that neither bears proportion to the crime, nor has any object of reformation in view, is vengeance; and here is a sentence of infinite duration for a finite crime: consequently everlasting punishment is eternal vengeance; and, therefore, I do not believe the divine nature had any thing to do with dividing the sheep from the goats, as Jesus supposed. Hate is finite; consequently not eternal: so I infer there can be no everlasting punishment. Love is immortal, being an attribute of the deity; consequently eternal: hence I infer there is a state of everlasting happiness.

If happiness is the sole object of man's pursuit, if the sum total of it is lessened by doing away this belief, and if reason be a faculty given to man for the purpose of making him happy, does it not follow that every argument tending to do away with this belief is unreasonable. This may seem a brief manner of coming to a conclusion; but some point must be established in every argument; and if reason is not made subservient to our happiness, it is certainly worse than useless, and may in time be turned into an engine of oppression, as revelation is at present by designing priests.

Z.

Mr. Editor—Inclosed is a copy of a letter from an aged gentleman, to his friend in this county, who has lately been very attentive to Mr. Phinney, the noted religious exciter. If you think proper to print it, it is at your service.

Hudson, December 23, 1827.

JUVAMOR.

From age, infirmity, and pain I perceive I am ere long to rest with my fathers, released from every burthen and pain, which is to me a comfortable consideration. Of a future life, I find no evidence, any more than did Moses and the prophets, who never mentioned it; nor more than did Job, David, and Solomon, who flatly denied a belief in it, as did also the Jews in Jesus's time, excepting their higher orders, the scribes and pharisees. But, contrary to my expectation, if I am to be called to an account before a universal and just father and judge merely for any conduct to my fellow creatures, as Jesus puts the case in his parable of the sheep and the goats, I think I shall be found to have done more good than harm: so there is a balance in my favor. To the father and judge I have never wished or done any harm; so that his justice will not move

him to do any harm to me. If he is the all creating, all knowing, and all managing sovereign, then I have never done any thing against his will; for who can resist or evade his will? In that case, all my faults and all worldly evils are in the range of his general system, and his eternal and fruitless vengeance or revenge will not, in justice, be wreaked on my feeble and passive head.

These are my reasoning conclusions after sixty years diligent reading, hearing, and impartially pondering, over and over, all that has been brought forward in opposition to them; all which opposition clearly appears to me to be a tissue of mystified sophistry, perplexing the subject, cavelling, explaining away the meaning of words, and driving people at last to deny the force of plain sense and reason, which are our only guides, and the habitual disrespect to which must debase and viciate the mind.

I have sought, in vain, for any ground of belief in what is called divine revelations. They have been announced as made to every people, savage or civilized; to obscure enthusiasts of every sect, and to many a half deranged object of pity in various ages and countries. They all contradict each other; while each one of them is ridiculously self contradictory in the eye of reason, whose inquiring test they all equally abhor. When thus braced and forearmed against all reasoning and scrutinizing inquiry, shakers and Mahometans can as well as any maintain and perpetuate their absurd dogmas. A shaker said to a methodist once in my hearing, "You think your religion is right, but we do know by revelation from God that ours is right;" and he was as sincere in it as are the martyrs to Jaggernaut in India, or as are our travelling excitors here, who, finding cool reason a barrier to their progress in making proselytes, adroitly manage to raise in assemblages a religious zeal and terror bordering on phrenzy, which, when followed up, will spread like an epidemic fever—overtop reason and subdue it by its extravagant agitation, seemingly supernatural. This has been well exemplified by your neighbors the shakers, and has shown that incoherent dogmas may, in these paroxysms, abstracted from all reason, be riveted indelibly on the mind with a fanatic flame, frequently leading to various grades of insanity. Nor is this mode of religious excitement unpractised among the wild savages and Mahometans, as stated by Carver, Hearne, De Tott, and others.

I hope that ——— and you will give these remarks more than one perusal; and that, whatever you may think of my doubting a future life, you will examine well the foundation of other doctrinal points in your creed. Read and scrutinize the Calvinistic confession of faith and the Bible, and consider whether it is credible that a just father and god made our first parents by his unerring skill, soul and body, just as he would have them to be, placing them in the garden so simple as not to know their being naked; hung in their reach a knowledge giving fruit, "pleasant to the eye and appearing good for food;" then, fearing they would get knowledge by eating it, made with them a covenant of abstinence, as might be done with children of three years old, knowing that they would break it! and who, when a talking serpent that he had made had tempted them and they had eaten of it and acquired knowledge, vindictively

fixed on them and their posterity a total depravity of mind, and a curse of eternal vengeance, excepting some of them, who, after thousands of years, were to be purified by the slaughter of a holy and innocent redeemer! And if you can find evidence of all this, I beseech you to let me have this evidence, that I may be also convinced, before I depart under a delusion. But if you deem it to be an allegory, with, probably, some hidden moral, as I do, then you are totally adrift from essential points of modern orthodoxy; for on the literal belief of this transgression, and the penal sentence since said to have been passed on it, hang all the New Testament doctrines of atonement. If there was no such fall and penal sentence, then there needed no redeemer—no ransom—no Adam.

This fable, or allegory from dark and fabulous ages, as it was written, was in character in ascribing the seductive words of the speaking snake to his brutal cunning, without any mention of Satanic influence. But, by that influence having since been foisted into it, with the realizing of the fable, and giving an unwarrantable stretch to the fall and its awful penalty, the hook has been formed and driven in, whereon Paul and other system makers have hung their heterogeneous creeds, blended with mythological tenets and rites of the Greeks and orientals beyond the sanction of the old Bible or of Jesus, though now revered and prevalent. But read, in Genesis, 3d chapter, 17th, 18th, and 19th verses, the whole extent of Adam's sentence of condemnation, and the tenure and termination of his existence.

THE TRINITY IN UNITY.

Mr. Editor—It has often been remarked, that every system of religion is only an imperfect description of some of the operations of Nature. This appears to be the case with the doctrine of three persons united in one. The trinity in unity has ever been an object of ridicule, and a stumbling block to the unbeliever; and though admitted to be true by the Christian world, it is a doctrine which, hitherto, they have never been able to support by any analogous circumstance in the works of Nature.

I have, for several years past, thought of communicating this important business to the public; nevertheless, seeing presumptive assertions received the same as proof, I have remained silent. But now, that challenges for natural proof are put forth from every quarter on one side, while a perfect silence subsists on the other, my disposition is altered. I therefore put them in possession of a fact, which may encourage the trinitarians to resume the use of their tongues again, lest peradventure it should be said they have given up the point.

The word *God* is very properly used as a representative of an invisible power existing in the elements in its threefold state, namely, *water*, *ice*, and *snow*, which are in themselves *all water*. Thus, in speaking of the godhead, it is said, that God is God, his son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet there are not *three gods*, but *one god*. So likewise in speaking of this element, I say, that water is water, ice is water, and snow is water; and yet there are not *three waters*, but

one water ; or, in this way, water is an element, and snow is an element ; and yet there are not *three* elements, but *one* element.

It is worthy of remark, that *water* is the element of which man, beast, and every vegetable are wholly composed ; and is therefore a most perfect representation of the three persons in unity, in its natural operations. Water represents the Father, by and of which all things in the animal and vegetable world are made ; ice represents the Son, of the same nature as the Father ; and snow represents the Holy Ghost, proceeding from, and of a substance between, the Father and the Son, or the water and the ice, and descends upon the sons of man as light and as harmless as a dove. The Son and the Holy Ghost, or the ice and the snow, vanish, ghost like ; but the Father, or the water, is every where, and is with us always. Here then is the exposition, and the only complete exposition that has been found in Nature, for this, hitherto, most mysterious of all figures ; and which goes to show that the doctrine of the trinity, like most other religious tenets, had its origin in a corrupt version of the doctrine of Nature.

CANDID.

JOVE AND THE SINNERS.

S. O Jove ! we wretched mortals humble ourselves before thee. We beseech thee, O Jove ! to pity and befriend us.

J. I do not like your mean flatteries and fawning. You must choose some other phrases, or some other deity.

S. O Jove ! we prostrate ourselves before thee. We acknowledge thee to be the Lord ! and beg leave to praise thee.

J. But I neither need nor desire your praises. Is this your professed humility—to suppose I can be delighted with *your* praises ? What palpable affectation, pride, and self flattery is this ?

S. We magnify thee, O Jove !

J. *Magnify* me ! How can you magnify me, you impudent fools ? And what liars, too, when, in fact, all your endeavors do but humanize and lessen me.

S. To show forth our gratitude and thy glory, we praise thee, O Jove !

J. I thought so ! I thought it was to blazen forth some of your own rare and exemplary virtues, under the pretence of showing forth my glory. Know, silly mortals, that what I give, I give freely. You would persuade me, that being afraid of incurring a debt with me, you would recompense me in glory. What conceit ! This vain commodity of glory must surely be of great value amongst weak mortals, when they seek to bribe with it even the immortal gods ! Have you then so mean an opinion of deity, as to think I cannot perform a generous act without a return of glory ? Or would you rob me of the greatest glory, which is to do good, without desiring any return—even of praise ? Low minded, perverting mortals—utterly ignorant, as you are, of the higher degrees of goodness—you worship your own vices and weaknesses, under the self delusive pretext of worshipping Jupiter ; and think to persuade him, who is not susceptible of persuasion, that your gross self flattery is real humility. Away with such piety. R.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 1828.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE TWELFTH.

In my last lecture, I pointed out the inconsistencies and absurdities of the story of the rainbow, and showed that the reasons assigned for placing it in the clouds were unscientific, and opposed to the perfections which are believed to belong to the character of deity. In the 11th chapter of Genesis, we have the history of a marvellous project about building a tower; which, according to the text, the projectors intended should reach to heaven. The story is thus narrated:

“And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.”

The first remark which occurs on perusing this passage is, that although the language which it is said was then universal is alluded to no less than four times, and although the Almighty is represented as having descended from heaven for the express purpose of confounding that language, we are not told what it was—whether it was Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Chinese, Welsh, English, Dutch, French, Irish, or Scotch. To us it would have been of little consequence, perhaps, what this pretended universal language or speech was; though if only a hint had been given on the subject, (and a single hint would have been sufficient,) it might have saved the labor of the literati, and the immense quantity of paper, pens, and ink, which have been expended in endeavoring, though without effect, to discover the secret. But in this, as well as in most other cases, it does not seem to have been the intention of the Bible writers to communicate any thing which might gratify the natural curiosity of man. Their style is ambiguous and confused; they content themselves with obscure vague assertions, as to facts which required the most satisfactory proofs, and the clearest elucidations, in order to entitle them to the credit of rational beings. The truth is, these writers, who had the presumption to

pretend to divine inspiration, were totally ignorant of the principles of science—of those eternal and immutable laws by which the universe is governed. In addition to the evidence which I have brought forward of this, we have in the text now before us a striking and indisputable confirmation of their having been utterly unacquainted with astronomy.

It is said that the people who inhabited the earth at the time spoken of purposed to build “a tower *whose top may reach to heaven.*” According to this statement, the author of Genesis believed the world to be *flat*, and a fixture; an opinion prevailing for many ages among all nations of whom we have any authentic records, except the Chaldeans. The Jews, in particular, were so dull and so ignorant as to admit of several heavens. The first they called the air—the second the firmament, to which the stars were fastened. This last was solid and of ice, and supported the upper waters, which, at the time of the deluge, broke through and overwhelmed the world. Over this firmament was the third heaven, to which Paul pretended he was caught up by God, though he could not tell whether he was dead or alive, sleeping or awake, drunk or sober, when this marvellous transmission took place. This third, or Paul heaven, was believed to be a kind of demi-arch encircling the earth. The Jews had no conception of the sun moving around our globe. When it got to the west, they fancied that it returned by some unknown path to the east, or came back during the night. This opinion admitted of no antipodes, and was entertained long after the introduction of Christianity, on which, notwithstanding, its professors *modestly* assure us that all our present knowledge of the arts and sciences was originally founded.

The idea of building a tower to reach to heaven has been admirably ridiculed by Palmer and other modern writers. It has been asked to what point in the heavens the builders of this tower intended to go? and by what means they were to get there? If to the moon, as that planet is 240,000 miles distant from the earth, it would take a builder, going at the rate of four miles an hour, night and day, without either sleep or refreshment, seven years to reach the destined point with one load of building materials. The distance from the earth to the sun is 95 millions of miles. This would take him, at four miles an hour night and day, near 3000 years to carry one load of lime! But if we go to the first of the fixed stars, we shall find this calculated at 1,710,000 millions of miles from the earth. At the above rate, it would take a builder about 48 millions of years to reach it. Suppose we take thirty years to a generation, and suppose all the children to meet with no hindrance on the journey, it would take about 1,600,000 generations to reach the first fixed star.

If they had made the foundation of Babel one fourth of a square mile in circumference, and made all the earth into bricks and lime—when they had used the whole earth for materials, and left poor Babel nothing to stand upon, they would have been little more than half way to the first fixed star; and the next fixed star is supposed to be as far behind the first as the first is from the earth. The earth travels in its orbit at the rate of 68,000 miles an hour, independent of its turning around on its own axis every twenty-four hours. This motion at the equator is 1038 miles an hour. The motion first mentioned is 140 times swifter than a cannon ball. If we add to this the many million times increased speed at the

point of Babel, compared with its speed at the point of the equator, or the surface of the earth, its motion would then be almost incalculable. Supposing, however, there had been a heaven, and that these Babel builders had been wise enough, when they had made all the earth into bricks and lime, to have carried the bricks from the foundation of Babel, and stuck them on the other end till they got far enough—unless the earth had lost its motion by changing its shape, they must have been very dexterous fellows that could have jumped into heaven as the point of Babel passed the entrance.

But supposing all these difficulties to be surmounted, a new one would arise when the builders approached so near the heavenly bodies as to feel, more forcibly from that quarter than from the earth, the power of attraction. In this case, men, brick, and mortar, together with all their tools and other materials, would fly off in a direct line to the moon, and forever prevent the completion of this wonderful project. The folly and impossibility of the thing stamp the whole story with a character which ought to make Christians ashamed of calling such nonsense the word of an intelligent god.

As a climax to the absurdity, the book informs us that the almighty maker of heaven and earth came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men were building. This omniscient being could not perceive this where he was. It was necessary to make a journey from heaven to earth in order to discover what plots and conjurations were going on against him. This system of religion will never cease to represent deity as a jealous being, full of apprehension for his safety, and terrified at the designs of those poor feeble mortals of whose existence we are told he was himself the author. Can any man of common sense believe it was necessary for a god to confound the language of any people to prevent an invasion of his celestial dominions? What absurdity is this, and how inconsistent with the perfections of that being who is represented as holding in his hands the sceptre of the universe—as possessed of all power in heaven and in earth, and who humbleth the hearts of man as pleaseth him! One would suppose that the writer of this chapter believed that these Babel builders intended to take heaven by storm; dethrone the Almighty, and seize upon the government of the universe. To add to the foolery, God is made, in his fears of being so served, to conform to this contemptible idea.

As to the project of confounding the language for the purpose of making mankind separate, this (as Mr. Paine has observed) “is altogether inconsistent; because, instead of producing this effect, it would, by increasing their difficulties, render them more necessary to each other, and cause them to keep together. Where could they go to better themselves? Another observation upon this story is, the inconsistency of it with respect to the opinion that the Bible is the word of God, given for the information of mankind; for nothing could so effectually prevent such a word being known by mankind as confounding their language. The people who after this spoke different languages, could no more understand such a word generally, than the builders of Babel could understand one another. It would have been necessary, therefore, had such word ever been given or intended to be given, that the whole earth should be,

as they say it was at first, of one language and of one speech, and that it should never have been confounded."

In the eleven chapters of Genesis which I have examined, there was much matter for comment and reprehension; but in the following six chapters there is, comparatively, little to be found that merits attention. In the beginning of the 18th chapter there is an account of Abraham's hospitality to three travelling gentlemen, whom the heading of the chapter denominates angels. They make some affectionate inquiries about Sarah, Abraham's wife—comfortable assurances are given to her that she should hereafter become the mother of a fine son, and this sets the good old lady a laughing—a momentous affair, indeed—a pretty story to be called the word of God!

We next come to the sulphurous Sodom and Gomorrah. "And the Lord said because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know." Here is another departure from the principles of theism, as taught in the Bible. God is again represented as being ignorant. He had heard a great many reports concerning Sodom and Gomorrah, the truth of which, owing to the distance of his celestial mansion from the earth, he could not well ascertain. He could not tell whether things were altogether so bad as they had been represented, and, therefore, said he, I will go down and make the inquiry myself, and then I shall know. Weak, imperfect man would have been under the necessity of pursuing such a course, in order to reduce doubt to certainty; but to represent an omniscient being as subject to similar imperfections and necessities, is to strip him of the brilliant attributes of divinity, and to reduce him to the human standard. It is, in fact, to annihilate his godhead altogether. A deity never made such a revelation of himself as this, and it is ignorance alone which ascribes it to intelligence.

The remaining part of this chapter consists of a familiar conversation, which is said to have taken place between Jehovah and Abraham, relative to the destruction of Sodom. In this interview, Abraham succeeds in reducing the claims of his god as low as possible; and, in the true spirit of bargaining, really accomplishes the object of making deity promise that he would save the city if ten righteous persons were found in it; whereas the first stipulation was fifty. After this degrading interview, God, it is said, went his way; and Abraham returned unto his place. How feeble, how imperfect must have been their ideas of the almighty ruler of the universe, when they could make such representations concerning his being and his conduct! Like two men standing in the street, holding a conversation about their own affairs, and when they had done, bidding each other "good bye," and then retiring to their houses. Such might have been the god of the Jews; but he falls infinitely short of that splendid being—that dignified character—that eternal existence recognized in the religion of Nature.

The story of Abraham, like that of Moses, and other Bible personages, is after all a mere fiction; for notwithstanding all the endeavors of theologians to give it the appearance of the history of human beings, it has preserved its mythological features with an outline and coloring easy to

be recognized. Abraham, as remarked by Voltaire, "is a name famous in Asia Minor and Arabia, like Thaut among the Egyptians, the first Zoroaster in Persia, Hercules in Greece, Orpheus in Thrace, Odin among the northern nations, and many others known rather by their celebrity than by any authentic history." We are told that Abraham was born in Chaldea, and that he was the son of a poor potter, who earned his bread by making little earthen idols. The Persians also claimed him as their own, and we know that the ancient religion of that people has been called, from time immemorial, *Kish Ibrahim*. Others assert that he was the *Brama* of the Indians. The Arabs regarded him as the founder of Méc-ca; and Mahomet, in his Koran, speaks of him thus: "Abraham was neither Jew nor Christian; he was an orthodox mussulman; he was not among the number of those that imagine God has colleagues."

It appears, in fact, that the Jews did not call themselves the descendants of Abraham until a very late period, when they had at last established themselves in Palestine. They were strangers, hated and despised by their neighbors, and wished to relieve themselves from the odium heaped on them, by passing for descendants of that Abraham who was so much revered in a great part of Asia, and whose name, which signifies, in more oriental languages than one, *Father of a People*, was so greatly renowned throughout the east long before the Jews existed as a nation—when they had neither town nor laws, nor even a fixed religion. When, therefore, we see an ancient rite or an ancient opinion established in Egypt or Asia, and also among the Jews, it is natural to suppose that this small, newly formed, ignorant, stupid people copied, as well as they were able, the ancient, flourishing, and industrious nations.

To be continued.

MISCELLANEOUS.

BIBLICAL ANECDOTES; OR, "THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART."

JOAB.

Abner, captain of Saul's host.—2 Samuel, chap. ii. v. 8.

Joab, captain of David's host.—Ver. 17, and chap. viii. v. 16.

David sends a flag of truce, and makes a great feast for Abner, and orders Joab to slay him.—Chap. xxiii. v. 20, 24.

David orders Joab to put Uriah into the front of the battle that he may be slain, and fornicates with his wife.—Chap. 11.

David removes Joab, and appoints Amasa in his stead.—Chap. xvii. ver. 25.

Joab slays Absalom (David's song *by his master's order*).—Chapter xviii. For which

David orders him to kill Amasa, and replaces him in his military office.—Chap. xx.

Catastrophe.—After having given thanks to Jehovah for his manifold mercies, "in making his life so spotless and void of reproach, and for giving him the victory over all his enemies," David dies; and just before

he goes off (having sung one of his psalms) says to Solomon, "Moreover, thou knowest what Joab, the son of Zerniah, did unto the two captains of the hosts of Israel, Abner and Amasa, and unto Absalom my son, and unto Uriah, the Hittite, whom he slew. Do, therefore, according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoary head go down in peace to the grave."—1 Kings, chap. ii. ver. 5 and 6. So Solomon, "being full of the grace of the Lord," orders Joab to the bow string: "for his mercy endureth for ever."

SHIMEI.

"Shimei cursed David."—2 Samuel, chap. xiv. ver. 5. "Therefore, (i. e. because Shimei had joined in David's triumphal procession from Gideon,) David said unto Shimei, the son of Gera, thou shalt not die: and the king swore 'unto him.'"—Chap. xix. ver. 23.

Catastrophe—Scene, David's death bed—David to Solomon.—"And behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, the son of Gera, who cursed me when I went down to Manhanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordon, and I swore unto him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the sword. Now, therefore, my son, hold thou him not guiltless, (for thou art a wise man, and knowest what oughtest to be done unto him,) but his hoar head bring THOU down to the grave WITH BLOOD,"—1 Kings, chap. ii. ver. 8 and 9.

SAUL.

Saul "compareth and imagineth the death of" David.—1 Samuel, chap. xviii. David swears to pardon him.—Chap. xix.

Catastrophe.—As a last proof of his "dying in the Lord," David, immediately previous to his joining his friend, Jehovah, in his heaven, orders two of *Saul's sons*, and five of his GRAND CHILDREN, to be hanged: "for his oath to Saul was to spare HIM;" but did not extend to HIS ISSUE, though they were not born at the time of Saul's conspiracy. And the Lord saw it all, and behold, "It was all very good."

The Crusaders.—At the siege of Lavour, Simon de Montfort had profited by all the progress which the art of war had made in that age. He had himself served in the Holy Land, and there were in his camp a great number of knights who had combated against the Turks and the Greeks, and who had, in the east, acquired the knowledge of the attack and the defence of fortified places. He employed, therefore, to overthrow the walls, ingenious machines, whose introduction was quite recent among the Latins, and which were as yet unknown to the inhabitants of the Pyrennees. The most fearful was that which was called *the cat*. A moveable wooden tower, strongly constructed, was built out of the reach of the besieged. When it was entirely covered with sheep skins with the fur outwards, to guard it from fire, and provided with soldiers at its openings, and on the platform at its summit, it was moved on rollers to the foot of the wall. Its side then opened, and an immense beam, armed with iron hooks, projected like the paw of a cat, shook the wall by reiterated strokes, after the manner of the ancient battering ram, and tore out, and pulled down, the stones which it had loosened. Simon de Montfort had constructed a cat, but the wide ditches of Lavour pre-

vented him from bringing it near enough to the walls. The crusaders, under the orders of Montfort, labored unceasingly to fill up the ditch, while the inhabitants of Lavaur, who could descend into it by subterranean passages, cleared away each night all that had been thrown in during the day. At last Montfort succeeded in filling the mines with flame and smoke, and thereby prevented the inhabitants from passing into them. The ditches were then speedily filled; the cat was pushed to the foot of the wall; and its terrible paw began to open and enlarge the breach. On the day of the finding of the *holy cross*, the 3d of May, 1211, Montfort judged the breach to be practicable. The crusaders prepared for the assault. The *bishops*, the *abbot of Courdieu*, who exercised the functions of vice legate, and all the *priests clothed with their pontifical habits*, giving themselves to the joy of seeing the carnage begin, sang the hymn *Veni Creator*. The knights mounted the breach. Resistance was impossible; and the only care of Simon de Montfort was to prevent the crusaders from instantly falling upon the inhabitants, and to beseech them rather to make prisoners, that the priests of the living God might not be deprived of their promised joys. "Very soon," continues the monk of Vaux Cernay, "they dragged out of the castle Aimery, lord of Montreuil, and other knights, to the number of eighty." The noble count immediately ordered them to be hanged upon the gallows; but, as soon as Aimery, the stoutest among them, was hanged, the gallows fell; for, in their great haste, they had not well fixed it in the earth. The count, seeing that this would produce great delay, ordered the rest to be massacred; and the *pilgrims*, receiving the order with the greatest avidity, very soon massacred them all upon the spot! The lady of the castle, who was sister of Aimery, and an "execrable heretic," was, by the count's order, thrown into the pit, which was filled up with stones. Afterwards, our pilgrims collected the innumerable heretics that the castle contained, and burned them alive with the utmost joy. Open hostilities had not yet commenced between Simon de Montfort and the count of Toulouse, but they followed immediately on the taking of Lavaur. The refusals to send provisions to the besiegers might serve as a pretext, but none was wanted for attacking those who were excommunicated. The castle of Montjoyre was the first place, immediately belonging to the count of Toulouse, before which the crusaders presented themselves; and being abandoned, it was burned and rased from top to bottom by the *soldiers of the church*. The castle of Cassero afforded them more satisfaction, as it furnished human victims for their sacrifices. It was surrendered on capitulation; and the pilgrims seizing nearly sixty heretics burned them with infinite joy. This is always the phrase employed by the monk who was the witness and panegyrist of the crusade.

Jewish Cabbala.—The highest kind of Talmudic science is that known by the name of Cabbala, a most absurd doctrine of mystical interpretation, which consists in the transportation of the letters composing the words of scripture, assigning to them arithmetical value, and taking each letter as the initial of a word; thus bringing out senses the most recondite and marvellous from the simplest and plainest parts of the text. Such as have become adepts in this occult science are regarded by

the rest of the Jews as a species of demi angelic beings. They arrogate to themselves the title "Possessors of the Name;" pretending that they have received the true mysteries and signification of the name of Jenovah, by which is conceded to them the power of working miracles. That a people generally inclined to yield unbounded credence to the doctrines of such impostors should be in the highest degree superstitious, cannot excite the least surprise. In nothing, however, is this superstition more apparent than in their use of the amulets, which they wear next their bodies and affix to the doors of their houses. These latter are generally inserted in an encasement, covered with glass, and are kissed by the Jews on entering or leaving the house. Such, indeed, is the importance they attach to them, that they firmly believe neither demons, ghosts, nor any power of magic can enter their habitations; and that when they touch the small piece of glass, enclosing the "divine" name, with the tip of their finger, and then stroke their eyes with it thrice, repeating the prayer, "The Almighty preserve me! The Almighty deliver me! The Almighty assist me!" no harm of any kind can befall them. The name Shaddai, or its initial, the Jews use as a talisman almost on every occasion. Even the butcher, when killing an ox, cuts this letter with his knife in all the principal parts of the animal, to prevent any influence from being exerted on them before the purchasers have conveyed them to their houses. Many of the Polish rabbins gain their livelihood by writing talismans, which they sell at an enormous price to the deluded multitude. They also teach them the cabbalistic or hidden meaning of the Psalms, and how to apply them for the prevention or removal of different diseases with which they may be attacked. Thus, the first psalm, written on parchment, and suspended round the neck of a female while in a state of pregnancy, prevents abortion and premature delivery; the second is an antidote for the headache, &c.

Monks.—A multitude of writers have asserted that the monastic state was instituted for the purpose of reviving and perpetuating the purity of morals of the first Christians. St. Jerome himself says, that the life led by the monks of his own times was same as that of the former. But where shall we now look for the primitive perfection? Is it in those magnificent monasteries, that resemble, by the grandeur and splendor of their architecture, the majestic palaces of kings, rather than the humble asylums of innocence and virtue? Is it in those *hospederias* of their monasteries, which are perpetually crowded with wealthy ladies and gentlemen, who, either through devotion for their patron saint, or friendship for the abbot, or prompted by their own interests, go to pay their court to him, and spend in those delightful retreats a day of mirth and amusement; the whole forming the strongest contrast with the deep silence that reigns in the interior of the cloisters? Or is it in those numerous country houses, and commodious town dwellings, which are the ordinary residences of their proctors, who are incessantly watching over the interests of the community, putting in claims the most distant, and involving people of slender fortunes in long and expensive law suits, frequently without a glimpse of right on their side, in order to accomplish their own objects? In surveying one by one the innumerable monasteries in Spain,

we shall find that even the wealthiest grandee cannot compete with them in objects of mere luxury: such, doubtless, are those thick, shady, and neatly lopped plantations which generally surround their convents; those interior extensive gardens, thickly studded with all kinds of fruit trees, and offering to the sight a scene no less beautiful than useful and agreeable; and lastly, those reservoirs filled with eels, tench, trouts, crawfish, and fresh water tortoises, which, though seldom appearing on the tables of their refectories, are to be found in those of their cells, and particularly in that of the *Senor Abad*, who never fails to regale his guests and protectors with the choicest of these dainties. But what shall we say of those capacious and numerous granaries, which seem every moment ready to sink under the immense weight of the corn collected from their lands and tithes? of these extensive subterranean caves, in which the most exquisite wines of Europe are annually laid up in prodigious and almost incredible quantities? of those magnificent stables, always well furnished with horses and mules of the best breed, height, and value? of those extensive pasture grounds and rich meadows, which are stocked with thousands of all sorts of cattle? and, lastly, of the commerce they make of all these articles, which, if not quite in accordance with their vows of poverty, is at least sufficiently lucrative to compensate for the sacrifice of principle?

Origin of the word Bigot.—The word bigot is derived by Camden, from the following circumstances: When Rollo, Duke of Normandy received Gisle, the daughter of Charles the Simple, king of France, in marriage, together with the investiture of that dukedom, he would not submit to kiss Charles's foot: and when his friends urged him by all means to comply with that ceremony, he made answer in the English tongue, "Ne se, by God," i. e. *Not so, by God*. Upon which, the king and his courtiers deriding him, and corruptly repeating his answer, called him *bigot*, from whence the Normans were called *bigodi*, or *bigots*.

Ubiquity.—It is curious to hear priests talk of the *ubiquity* of the Deity, and yet at the same time furiously deny his *material* existence at all? For if the Deity is spirit, the Deity is nothing, or a nonentity; for a spirit is nothing which can neither be described or pencilled. Therefore there is no God (according to their dogmas) unless it can be supposed there is an immaterial *something* floating about, which however occupies no space, has no parts, no solidity, extension nor any other properties of matter, and yet this nothing is something, and possesses volition to real action. Priests only make this problem; they alone can solve it. However they may reason away any difficulties of this kind, they can never, with any face, deny there is a *ubiquity* of priests who cringe, fawn and tyrannize; that there is a *ubiquity* of spies and informers, who live by calumny and perjury; a *ubiquity* of magistrates who support them; and lastly, a *ubiquity* of gold which supports them all.—*Pigott*.

Te Deum.—A hymn of praise and thanksgiving offered up by Christians to the God of Peace, in celebration of those massacres called

victories. I have studied the English people thoroughly, and I verily believe they are very rapidly indeed merging towards popery; nor should I be astonished to see the English church a real church militant, its priests at the head of armies carrying the bloody banners of war into the churches, to be consecrated at a polluted altar, and an Auto-de-se to crown the whole.---*Pigott.*

Dedications.—Many authors and editors have the custom in Spain to dedicate books to the Almighty, to his angels, to his saints, and even to those of their images that are in reputation of being miraculous. A volume of Calderon's Autos Sacramentales is by a printer dedicated to the patriarcha San Juan de Dois, though he was no patriarch at all, but a bookseller of Grenada, as the dedicatory letter informs us, who in a fit of devotion threw into the fire all the books he had in his shop, those of piety only excepted. That San Juan (or St. John) was the founder of an order which professes ignorance. It was natural for a man who burnt his books to think of forming such an institution.

Drunkenness expels reason, drowns the memory, defaces beauty, diminishes strength, inflames the blood, causes internal, external, and incurable wounds; is a witch to the senses, a devil to the soul, a thief to the purse, the beggar's companion, a wife's woe, and children's sorrow; makes a strong man weak, and a wise man a fool. He is worse than a beast, and is a self murderer, who drinks to others' good health and robs himself of his own.

Religion expels reason, destroys the memory, drowns the understanding, diminishes health, inflames the passions, causes massacres, robberies, and villainies innumerable; is a thief to the purse, the dupe's companion, the support of impostors, the parent of priestcraft, a foe to learning, and the friend of tyrants; is the boast of fools, and the wise man's jest. And he is either rogue or fool, or a compound of both; who, having the history of the world and the experience of past ages before him, denies that religion is a pest and a most disgraceful and most oppressive burden to mankind.

TO OUR PATRONS.

As one number more will complete the first year of the publication of the *Correspondent*, we think it necessary to call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication, namely: that those residing in the country should pay one year (\$3) in advance, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months in advance. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it vital support; and, as we have neither eccle-

siastical treasures, nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if city subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year at our office, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

Paine's Birthday.—The Free Press Association intend to celebrate the anniversary of the birthday of THOMAS PAINE, by a public dinner, on the 29th instant. Further particulars in our next.

Lectures on Science.—The next lecture on science will be delivered in the Hall of the *Free Press Association*, William street, on Sunday, (tomorrow,) the 13th instant, at 11 o'clock forenoon, precisely. The theological lectures, as usual, at half past 2 o'clock P. M.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

Paine's Theological Works, complete, 8vo., bound and gilt—\$2; bds. \$1.50.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Mr. Editor—I was both pleased and surprised to see the article signed Z. in the last number of the *Correspondent*: pleased, because you evinced an unusual degree of liberality in admitting an article which, in its general bearing, I think, must be in direct opposition to your opinion—surprised, that a writer who appears so free from prejudice should view the subject in the light he does. I beg leave to offer a few remarks on the principal points in his argument.

Z. says he is "not able to see the benefit that will arise to society if the opinion (a disbelief in the immortality of the soul) should be established." Now, to those who can form no conception of a soul—who believe it to be nothing but a name—the disbelief in its immortality must, of course, already "be established." Yet I know of no extraordinary evil that has arisen to those whose perceptions have placed them in this predicament. Granting, however, for the sake of illustration, that man carries the thing called soul about him through life; and that after death, or disorganization, this invisible something is destined for a state of endless happiness; I cannot perceive what possible "benefit" could be derived by "society" from a belief in such a doctrine. On the contrary, would not such belief tend to lessen our attachment to the really good things of the present life, and lead us to wonder why we were doomed to this probationary trial—this sort of purgatory? If a poor man bought a lottery ticket, and was perfectly convinced that he should obtain a very high prize on the drawing of the lottery at some future period, would he not be apt to relax his exertions to obtain a livelihood by his former tedious means? and would not the time hang heavily on his hands that intervened between that and the period of his anticipated good fortune?

"It may be said, (adds Z.) that there are no reasons to found a belief of the immortality of the soul upon. To this I answer, that the belief is already founded, and all we have to do is to let it alone." So is the belief in the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth "already founded;" and so are many other equally fallacious and absurd beliefs; but I think it by no means follows that "all we have to do is to let" them "alone." It is our duty to oppose error in whatever shape we find it; for good can never result from error. If the truth of a doctrine cannot be known, it is folly to support that doctrine; for all doctrines that are intended for the benefit of society will stand the test of reason: none others can operate as a benefit. That the truth of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul cannot be known, Z. allows to be inferred when he says, "those who en-

deavor to establish the disbelief are as ignorant of what the truth is on the subject as those who advocate it."

"If happiness is the sole object of man's pursuit," "the sum total of it" will not be "lessened by doing away" a belief in the immortality of the soul; for if we pursue the true means of happiness in this life, "which is a daily practise of good and benevolent actions," happiness in a future state (if there should be one) will follow of course, whether we believe in that future state or not. It would be absurd to say we should be deprived of such happiness because we could not foresee that it was in store for us.

My remarks have been confined to the immortality of the soul in a state of happiness. I agree with Z. in rejecting the doctrine of everlasting punishment.

Z. remarks that "there cannot be a better general rule made in breaking down priestcraft, than to preserve all such parts as they have selected for their own dear selves." But I humbly ask to be permitted to retain the small portion of the good things of this world which may honestly fall to my share; gladly conceding to the priesthood all my right and title to the indescribable felicities of the next, in return for their honest and disinterested support of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

G. H. E.

INTOLERANCE.

Mr. Editor—Inclosed is a note of five dollars on the United States Bank. Although the *Correspondent* is a work my religious prejudices are very much opposed to, yet the rights of those concerned are equal to mine, and justice requires that they should be heard; and I am determined to support a paper that dares to publish the truth. The liberals are a class of men who never combined to oppress their fellow creatures; and if experience should prove them wrong, the candid historian can never charge them with selfish motives. I think it time for every man who prefers truth to error seriously to consider whether any belief or conduct can justify an act of injustice in return for such belief or conduct. This class of individuals never have been charged with any crime but unbelief. In all ages they have been hunted down, pursued and bound by the strong arm of power, since the day that man was paid for preaching and fighting. Since the time that man dared to think for himself have this devoted people been closely pressed on all sides by the torch and the faggot, the sword and the bayonet, the roar of cannon and the thunders of the church; all for the redeemer's kingdom, who told his followers that those who used the sword should perish by the sword, and when they were reviled to revile not again; which, I suppose, will take a good deal of logic to reconcile, in that day of account which they make such a blustering and rearing about.

I have my own prejudices and my own religion; but I love freedom of thought and expression as I love the dearest thing in life. I can tolerate every thing but intolerance. Every kind of belief that requires no submission from others I can freely tolerate, for it is not necessary to happiness that all mankind should come to one religion; but it is absolutely

required that they should be as honest in mental as in physical things. I would as soon rob a man of his horse as injure him personally, or take away his good name because he could not worship the same god and have the same religion that I had. My religion is my own as much as the hair on my head, and this I hold as an inherent right guaranteed to me by the author of my being; a right that I never surrendered to government, or to any authority on earth, nor ever will while I retain my present sense of justice. I acknowledge to hold it by the best of all titles, that of freely granting the same privilege to others. I act on this principle because I think if such a compact of equal justice was rightly understood and acted upon, it would introduce into the world the most valuable treasure ever known to man; for mental freedom as much exceeds the enjoyment of political liberty, as the pleasures of the mind surpass the gratification of our animal appetites. Mankind, in this state of society, would soon fall into a candid and honest explanation of all their views on any subject that presented itself. Every individual would have the advantage of the experience of the whole, and we should soon see as great a developement of the principles and laws of mind, as we now see in matter; and our intellectual enjoyments would be as much increased by those discoveries in metaphysics, as the ease and comfort of our bodies are increased by the vast improvements made in the mechanical arts. Communication would extend itself into all quarters, and knowledge cover the earth as the waters do the sea; swords would then be beat into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks; the lion would lay down with the lamb; that is, the savage nature of man would be tamed into a mild and lamb like disposition; and nothing would be found to hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain; that is, the heart of man would be softened toward his fellow man: and, as this millenium was gradually introduced, superstition, with all her engines of power and oppression, would shrink into utter oblivion. Man would then be free, and every one might sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and none should make him afraid.

Z.

QUESTIONS, BY A SEARCHER AFTER TRUTH.

Mr. Editor—Doth not the “onus probandi” fall on the *affirmer*, and not on the *denier*, of any thing?

Can we believe what we cannot conceive?

If God be incomprehensible, can we believe in him?

Can we be as certain of the existence of that which is *not* the object of our senses, as of that which is the object of our senses?

Are there not degrees in belief?

Must a thing necessarily exist, because many men affirm *that it doth exist*?

Can a *positive* idea be expressed in wholly *negative* terms?

Can we argue upon a thing that we cannot define *positively*?

Can we define *positively* the word “spirit,” or “immateriality?”

When savages are ignorant of the cause of any thing, do they not attribute it to a spirit?

Is not the “Great Spirit” a mere personification of unknown causes?

- What is the difference between "nothing" and "spirit?"
- Can an immaterial being draw matter out of his own substance?
- What was God about, before he created matter?
- What could have induced a deity to create?
- Can an immutable being change his mind?
- If it were proper that matter should be created, why was it not created from all eternity?
- If matter be eternal, is it not coeval with the Deity?
- Doth not matter occupy space?
- Can two things simultaneously occupy the same space?
- Can there be any god, or spirit, in the space occupied by matter?
- Can any thing be infinite when matter excludes it from a portion of space?
- Can two infinities exist together?
- Can any thing be infinite as well as indivisible?
- Are not action and reaction reciprocal?
- Can matter *act upon* that which is not matter?
- Can matter *be acted upon* by that which is not matter?
- Can we form any idea independent of form and figure?
- Can we form any idea of a spirit without giving it form and figure?
- Can that which hath form and figure be immaterial?
- If the universe be every thing, must not that which is no part of it be nothing?
- Could Nature have existed otherwise than it now existeth?
- Can we prove that matter cannot think?
- Can an animal reason without a brain?
- Do not those animals reason best, who have the organs of the brain most fully developed?
- Doth not reason depend on the developement of the brain?
- What is there that doth not depend on matter and motion?
- Can we prove that matter was ever quiescent?
- Are not animalculæ produced spontaneously?
- Can there be vinegar in which there are not animalculæ?
- If certain *known* states of matter can produce *animalculæ*, could not certain *unknown* states of matter have produced *animals*?
- Can we define the word "soul," except as being the vital principle?
- Where was the soul before the body was created?
- Doth a man generate a soul at the same time that he generateth a child?
- When doth the soul enter the fœtus?
- Hath a still born child a soul? Hath an idiot? Hath an ourang outang? Hath an elephant?
- Doth an elephant reason less than idiot?
- If women are less capable of reasoning than men, must not the souls of women be inferior to those of men?
- If there be a gradation in souls, where doth this gradation end?
- Cannot there be reason without a soul?
- Cannot there be a soul without reason?
- Where is the soul during sleep? or in persons apparently drowned? or in persons stupified by a blow on the head?

If souls are continually being created during an infinity of time, must they not at last occupy an infinity (or the whole) of space?

Of what substance are the souls created?

Can any thing come out of nothing?

ZENO.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1828.

Should any of our subscribers not receive the first number of Vol. III. of the *Correspondent*, which will be published on the 26th of January, they must attribute this to a non compliance, on their part, with the conditions published in our original prospectus. The early numbers of Vol. I., which we could not supply, are now in the hands of the printer; so that we shall be able shortly to complete the volume.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE TWELFTH.

Continued from page 394.

Nothing could afford a more decisive proof of the ignorance and stupidity of the Jewish writer of the history of Abraham, than the blundering accounts he has left of this pretended chief or head of his race. In the 26th verse of the 11th chapter of Genesis, we are told that "Terah lived 70 years, and begat Abraham, Nahor, and Haram. In verse 32 it is said, "And the days of Terah were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran." It is evident from these texts that Terah, having had Abraham at the age of 70, died at that of 205; and Abraham having quitted Chaldee immediately after the death of his father, was just 135 years old when he left the country. But, if we turn to the 12th chapter of this same book of Genesis, we will find the author of it, though inspired by God, forgetting all this, and telling us, at the 4th verse, that "Abraham was 75 years old when he departed out of Haran." How could he be at once 135 years old, and only 75? This has puzzled many intelligent persons accustomed to think. But to those who have received grace from above, by which they are able to comprehend how three gods can be only one god, the disparity in the statement as to Abraham's age appears perfectly reconcilable.

It is stated in the 13th chapter of Genesis, verse 14, "And the Lord said unto Abraham after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou now art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward. For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." In the 15th chapter, ver. 18, we have the same promise renewed in these words, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."

How could God promise the Jews this immense country which they have never possessed? And how could he give to them, *for ever*, that small portion of Palestine out of which they have been so long driven, and, according to present appearances, are not likely ever to possess?

If ever it was a land "flowing with milk and honey," the Jews of this day are so convinced of its entire worthlessness, that if its possessors were to offer to convey them thither free of charges, and to give them an indisputable title to the country, they would turn a deaf ear to the proposal.

The Lord is said, in chapter 13th, verse 16, to have added to the promise of everlasting possession, that he would make the seed of Abraham "as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." Now, it is well known, that although the Jews have always regarded marriage as a sacred duty, and made population their greatest object, they never at any period of their history equalled the number of the present inhabitants of the United States. To this difficulty it is replied, that the Christian church, substituted for the Jewish synagogue, is the true race of Abraham, who are, therefore, very numerous. But so far from the number of professing Christians equalling the "dust of the earth," they bear but a small proportion to the professors of the other religions scattered over the face of the globe.

The victory, mentioned in the 14th chapter of Genesis, said to have been obtained by Abraham, near Sodom, presents fresh difficulties. It is inconceivable that a stranger, who drove his flocks to graze near that place, should, with only three hundred and eighteen keepers of sheep and oxen, beat a king of Persia, a king of Pontus, the king of Babylon, and the king of nations, and pursue them to Damascus—a distance of more than one hundred miles from Sodom. It is true, nothing will appear strange in this to those who believe the story of Gideon, who with three hundred men, armed with three hundred pitchers, and three hundred lamps, defeated a whole army; or of Sampson, who slew one thousand Philistines with the jaw bone of an ass!

It has been asked by the author of the Philosophical Dictionary, why Abraham, who was 135 years old when he quitted Mesopotamia, went from a country called idolatrous to another idolatrous country named Sichem, in Palestine? Why did he quit the fruitful banks of the Euphrates for a spot so remote, so barren, and so stony as Sichem? It was not a place of trade, and was distant one hundred leagues from Chaldea, and deserts lay between. Scarcely had he arrived in this little mountainous country, when famine compelled him to quit it. He went to Egypt with his wife Sarah, to seek a subsistence. The distance from Sichem to Memphis is two hundred leagues. Is it natural that a man should go so far to ask for corn in a country the language of which he did not understand? Truly these were strange journies, undertaken at the age of nearly one hundred and forty years!

Abraham brought with him to Memphis his wife Sarah, who was extremely young, and almost an infant when compared with himself—for she was only sixty-five. As she was very handsome, he resolved to turn her beauty to account. "Say, I pray thee, that thou art my sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake." The king fell in love with young Sarah, and gave the pretended brother abundance of sheep, oxen, he asses, she asses, camels, man servants, and maid servants. The enraptured monarch placed Sarah in his seraglio; but the Lord, it is said, plagued the king and his household with very great sores. The text

does not tell us how the Egyptian prince came to know that his dangerous beauty was Abraham's wife. But it seems that he did come to know it, and restored her.

Sarah's beauty must have been unalterable; for twenty-five years afterwards, when she was ninety years' old, pregnant, and travelling with her husband through the dominions of a king of Phenicia, named Abimelech, Abraham made her a second time pass for his sister. The Phenician king was as sensible to her attractions as the king of Egypt had been; but God appeared to Abimelech in a dream, and threatened him with death if he touched his new mistress.

Commentators have written a prodigious number of volumes to justify Abraham's conduct in these transactions. But, with all their ingenuity and acuteness, they have never been able to clear the "Father of the Faithful" from the charge of having told two falsehoods; the one to the king of Egypt, and the other to the king of Phenicia, respecting Sarah. He was also grossly culpable in giving her up to the embraces of these kings; which, it is evident from his own language, he did from the base, mercenary motive of increasing his flocks and his herds. Nor can we understand how Jehovah, instead of punishing, or even reproving Abraham for his guilty proceedings, should have plagued the king of Egypt with great sores, and also his household, when that monarch was totally unacquainted with the relationship that existed between Abraham and Sarah. If chastisement was due any where, it ought to have been inflicted on the man who to falsehood added the crime of prostituting his wife for the sake of riches, and not on the individual and his family who could not be aware that they were even acting improperly.

In the beginning of the 19th chapter, we are introduced to two personages, who are first called angels, then lords, and afterwards men. They pay a visit to Lot, who prepares for them a feast; but they had scarcely sat down to table when a mob gathers around the door and demand a sight of the travellers. A riot ensues, which terminates in Lot exposing his two daughters to the insults of the rabble rather than give up his visitors. Now who were those two men, and what was their business and character, that a whole city should be set in an uproar about them? It is evident, from the tumult which their arrival occasioned, that they were suspected of some sinister object. The populace seldom proceed to extremities without some powerful cause of excitement. As to their smiting the mob with blindness, and predicting, in the name of the Lord, the destruction of the place, they are not the only jugglers that have played off the same game. Every age and country has produced a race of travelling prophets and hypocrites, who go about for the purposes of alarm—speaking in the name of heaven, and threatening vengeance whenever it suits their caprice, or gratifies their resentment.

This story farther affirms, that Lot with his family made their escape out of the city; and then commences the most wonderful and miraculous shower of fire and brimstone, which God is said to have sent down in his wrath, for the purpose of destroying the creatures of his power and goodness. A shower of fire and brimstone! Who can form any conception of it? Is it consistent with the laws of Nature? No—it is one of the fictions of fanaticism, and destitute of all the features rationality.

But what had mistress Lot done that she must be salted in such a wonderful manner? Of what consequence was it which way she looked—whether backward or forward, to the right or the left? Was there any thing reprehensible in casting back a wishful eye towards the place of her former residence? What was there in this circumstance, so very natural, which marked it with criminality? The truth is, that no such occurrence as turning her into a pillar of salt could take place. It was inconsistent with the laws of existence, and in its own nature impossible.

This chapter closes with a story of disgusting indelicacy, relative to Lot and his two daughters, which forbids all comment. It stands barricaded behind a breastwork of detestable indecency, falsehood, and impossibility—so indecent and detestable, that if the Old Testament books were unexceptionable in every other respect, this story alone would render them utterly infamous.

The 22d chapter of Genesis begins in the following manner: "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him Abraham, and he said, here I am. And he said take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Here opens another scene of injustice, cruelty, and inhumanity. A God, who is represented to be all kindness and all compassion, laying a positive injunction on a man to violate all the paternal affections of the human heart—to draw the murdering knife on his own son—to subvert the very foundation of those tender attachments by which families are united in the bonds of peace and friendship! What man in his senses can believe, that a mandate so atrocious could emanate from a god of perfect justice and universal benevolence? If ever Abraham made the attempt which it is said he did, it must have been the effect of a bloody and ferocious fanaticism—a fanaticism that triumphs over all the sympathetic affections of the human heart, and brutalizes the character of man.

By further attention to this account we find, that Abraham was also guilty of deception, and that he concealed the truth from his son. When arrived at the fatal spot where the bloody tragedy was to be acted, Isaac asks with solicitude, "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham, as if conscience convicted, evades a direct answer by declaring that God would provide a lamb for the purpose. But after all the parade and preparation for this bloody business, it seems that the order was countermanded. An angel appears and arrests the murdering hand of Abraham. This, however, does not mend the matter; for the command, and the intention to obey, have marked the character of Abraham and his god with an indelible stain. But Christians say, that all this was done for the trial of Abraham's faith. Was God then ignorant of the true state of Abraham's mind? And was it necessary to play off such a farce to ascertain the truth? The angel says, For now I know thou fearest God. But God knew this before, whether the angel did or not.

When Abraham found that he was prevented from murdering his son, it might have been expected that his thirst for blood would have been allayed. But no—he discovers an old ram caught in a thicket, which he

seizes. Something, says he, must die : without the shedding of blood my soul will never rest. This is the true spirit of the thing ; and in this manner was the " Father of the Faithful " gratified in his sanguinary desires. As a close to this immoral business, God is made to promise to Abraham that he would *bless* him for what he had done, and that in him should all the families of the earth be blessed. Precious compensation for such wicked—such murdering designs. It was impossible that a god, who is represented as holding in his hands the destinies of the universe, could have been a party in transactions so abhorrent to the best feelings of the heart, and to the principles of eternal justice.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Liberty and Necessity.—To enumerate all the divines who have attempted to solve the difficulties of this subject, and to reconcile faith and reason, would be to transcribe volumes of divinity, a task for which I have no inclination. I have got to the bottom of all their mud and mire, and tread on firm ground ; for I believe nothing that I cannot understand, how little soever that may be : and on these topics, if every man would ingenuously confess his ignorance, the sum of our knowledge would be found to lie in a small space. The number of moral philosophers who have attempted to solve the difficulties of liberty and necessity, is not much less than that of the divines who have tried to bring reason and theology together. The subject is nowhere discussed with greater force of argument, vivacity, and good temper, than in the correspondence between Voltaire and Frederic of Prussia : the monarch had the best side of the question, but neither was deficient in elegance and well turned compliment ; they disputed like philosophers and like gentlemen, not like angry pedants tenacious of their own opinions ; and their dispute is a model of philosophic discussion and polite controversy. Though much has been written on the doctrine of necessity, and many forcible arguments have been adduced to prove its existence, it has not yet found many proselytes, and for this reason : it is inconsistent with the belief of one of the principle doctrines of Christianity ; for no man who believes in the force of necessity, can believe himself the subject of future reward or punishment. Lord Kaimes has answered all the objections to this doctrine on the ground of immorality ; and his essay is one of the best which the subject can afford. The writings of the ancients abound with proofs of their belief in an overruling necessity, which the Greeks called by various names, and the Latins *Necessitas* and *Fatum* ; the force of destiny they believe to be superior to that of the gods, and the dæmon of Socrates means nothing else than the power of necessity. The treatise of Plutarch on Fate contains some very strong passages on the subject of necessity. "All things," says he, "in heaven and in earth are constituted by an original necessity, and governed by the same, through all the revolutions of time and eternity. He then endeavors to reconcile this notion of necessity with the idea of providence, free will, and contingency ; in which he is by no means successful, and argues like a man who does not under-

stand his subject, and is restrained in his inquiry after truth by some latent prejudice. To this it may be answered, that the belief of the heathens is of no consequence to us who have the light of the gospel to guide us; but in my humble opinion, the belief of the wisest heathens is preferable to that of those who believe in revelation; for the one is the effect of unclouded reason, the other of blind superstition. Innumerable passages might be quoted from Greek and Roman authors to prove the existence of that necessity by which all the universe is linked together. Indeed it is hardly possible to open any Greek or Roman writer without finding the power of necessity acknowledged, in almost every page, as superior to all human power, and even to that of the gods; in short, as coeval with the existence of matter, and existing from eternity. The god of the Jews and the Christians is nothing more than the all powerful necessity of the heathens, clothed with human attributes; and, for my own part, I had rather submit to the latter than the former; because in suffering misfortune by the will of providence, I feel myself treated with unkindness and unjust partiality; but in suffering under an inevitable necessity, I experience no more than the common lot of all human beings.

Superstition of the Prince of Reformers.—Eight years since (said Martin Luther) at Dessau, I did see and touch such a changed child, which was twelve years of age: he had his eyes and all his members like another child; did nothing but feed, and would eat as much as two clowns or threshers were able to eat. When one touched it, then it would cry out; when any evil happened in the house, then it laughed and was joyful; but when all went well, then it cried and was very sad. I told the prince of Anhalt if I were prince of that country so would I venture *Homicidium* thereon, and would throw it in the river Maldow. I admonished the people devoutly to pray to God to take away the devil; the same was done accordingly, and the second year after the changeling died. In Saxonia, near unto Halberstad, was a man that also had a *killcrop*, who sucked the mother and five other women dry; and, besides, devoured very much. This man was advised that he should, in his pilgrimage at Halberstad, make a promise of the *killcrop* to the Virgin Mary, and should cause him there to be rocked. This advice the man followed, and carried the changeling thither in a basket. But going over a river, being upon the bridge, another devil that was below in the river called, and said, "Killcrop, killcrop!" Then the child in the basket, that never before spoke one word, answered, "Ho, ho!" The devil in the water asked further, "Whither art thou going?" The child in the basket said, "I am going towards *Hocklestad*, to our loving mother, to be rocked." The man, being much affrighted thereat, threw the child, with the basket, over the bridge into the water. Whereupon the two devils flew away together, and cried, "Ho, ho, ho," tumbling themselves one over another, and so vanished. Such changelings and killcrops, said Luther, *supponit Satan in locum verorum filiorum*; for the devil hath this power, that he changeth children, and instead thereof layeth devils in the cradle, which prosper not, only they feed and suck. But such changelings live not above eighteen or nineteen years.—*Colloquia Mensalia*.

Truth.—What kind of government must that be where it is *judged* libellous to tell the truth of the *creature*, but praiseworthy to calumniate the *Creator*? What kind of government, or rather what kind of tyranny, must that be, where the noble and investigating mind of man dares not promulgate known truths; where the scrutinizing eye of the philosopher has penetrated, but where that eye dares only see in secret? What can we think of a state where our religion is the patch work of priests, and our system of policy the Dagon of a few wily and idolatrous knaves called statesmen? Where, upon the only subjects worthy of disputation or minute inquiry, all the noblest faculties of the soul are hushed into silence, and fettered down to the received opinions of an age of superstition and prejudice, on pain of the most cruel and vindictive punishments? Truth in such a country is a stranger; she wanders up and down like a houseless pilgrim, not having where to lay her head; and if she chance to stray into some lowly cottage, she is driven out with unrelenting fury, by some loyal brute or other, in the person of an ignorant, hot headed magistrate, or a bigoted, intolerant priest! Thus persecuted and thus driven from all society, she droops her head in piteous languishment, yet still struggles against the opposing tide, each struggle fainter than the former, and her fate still tumbling on the balance, till at last she is overwhelmed at once by the strong arm of power, and plunged into the pitchy shades of everlasting night!—*Pigott.*

Torture.—Invented by monks, and practised by priests on unbelieving heretics at an Auto de Fe, in order to bring those sinful renegades within the pale of the Christian church. Whence the term *impaling*!! But as their souls are saved by it, is all very right!!—*Ib.*

TO OUR PATRONS.

As this number will complete the first year of the *Correspondent*, we call the attention of our subscribers to the conditions on which we commenced the publication: that those residing in the country should pay one year (£3) *in advance*, besides postage; and those residing in town, six months *in advance*. These terms, we regret to say, have, in several instances, not been complied with as to the current year, which renders it necessary that we should *discontinue* sending the paper, not only to those who are now in arrear, but to those who may not in future conform to the original conditions.

We should hope that no one has subscribed to the *Correspondent* but such as wished to give it *vital* support; and, as we have neither ecclesiastical treasures nor benefices on which to draw, we trust that every well wisher to the cause will be prompt in affording us that aid which is so essential to the permanency of the establishment. Our own personal labors have as yet been gratuitous; but, judging from the great interest felt for our success, and relying on the exertions of the friends of liberal principles to extend the circulation of the *Correspondent*, we have no

doubt that we shall be ultimately remunerated. Meanwhile, if city subscribers were to pay their subscriptions for one year at our office, it would save the expense of collecting, materially promote the prosperity of the concern, and greatly facilitate our labors.

We have a variety of interesting pieces on file, with which we intend to commence our third volume; among which are, "the important Examination of the Scriptures, by Lord Bolingbroke," (originally written in French;) "the Doubts of the Infidels;" "the God of the Jews, or Jehovah Unveiled;" "Watson Refuted," by the author of "the Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables;" "the Life of David," &c. And should our encouragement be equal to what we think we are warranted to anticipate, it is our intention to print the *Correspondent* on a finer paper than that on which it is now issued. We have had such ample proofs of good feeling on the part of those with whom we are associated in the great cause of mental emancipation, that we cannot allow ourselves to doubt of their determination to do every thing that is just and necessary to promote an object of such vital importance.

Paine's Birthday.—The Free Press Association intend to celebrate the anniversary of the birthday of THOMAS PAINE, by a public dinner, on the 29th instant, in Boisseux's Dancing Academy, opposite Washington Hall, Broadway. Dinner on the table at 3 o'clock P. M. Tickets \$1 each, to be had at the office of the Correspondent, No. 15 Chamber street, and of the Committee of Arrangements.

Lectures on Science.—The next lecture on science will be delivered in the Hall of the Free Press Association, William street, on Sunday, (tomorrow,) the 20th instant, at 11 o'clock forenoon, precisely. The theological lectures, as usual, at half past 2 o'clock P. M.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

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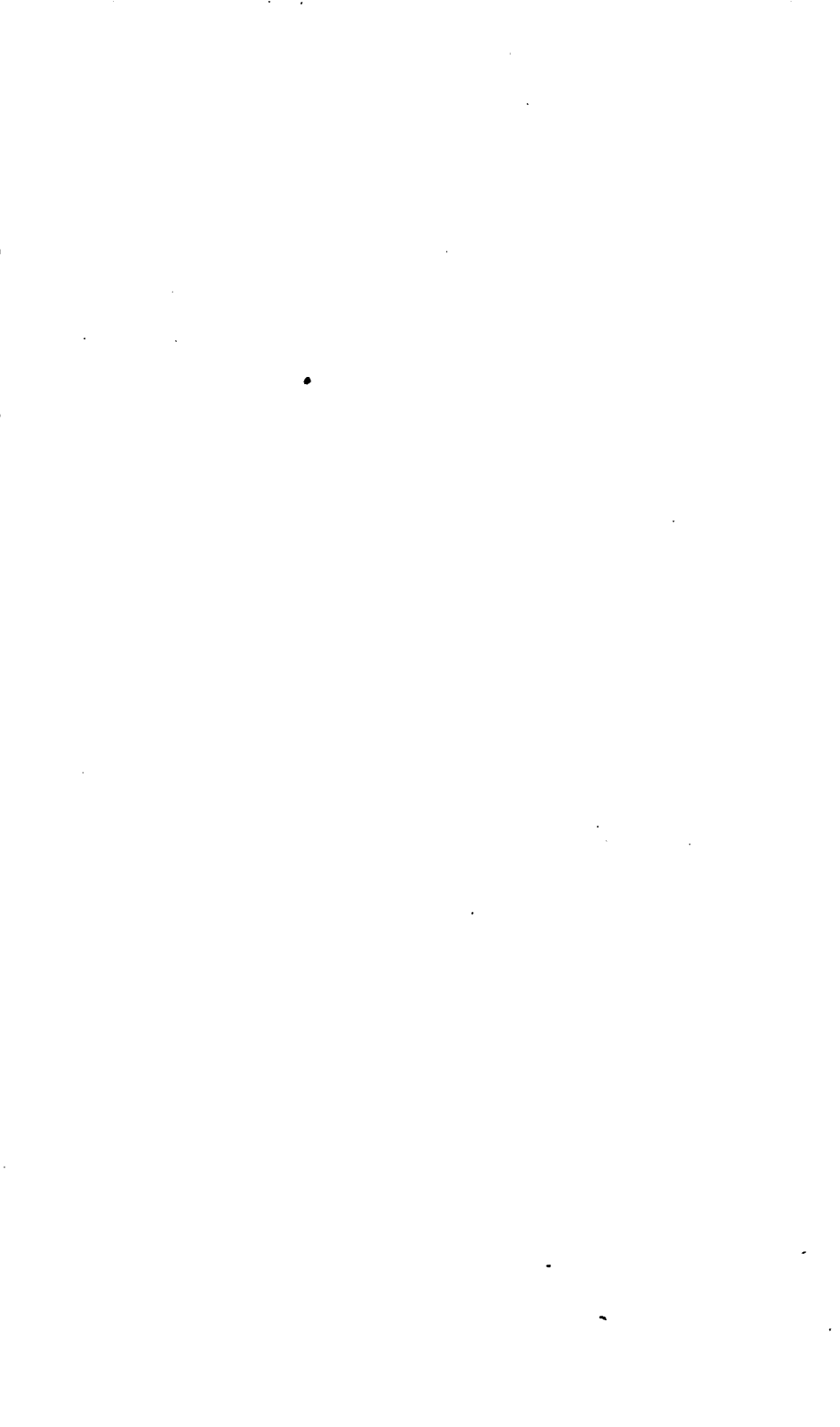
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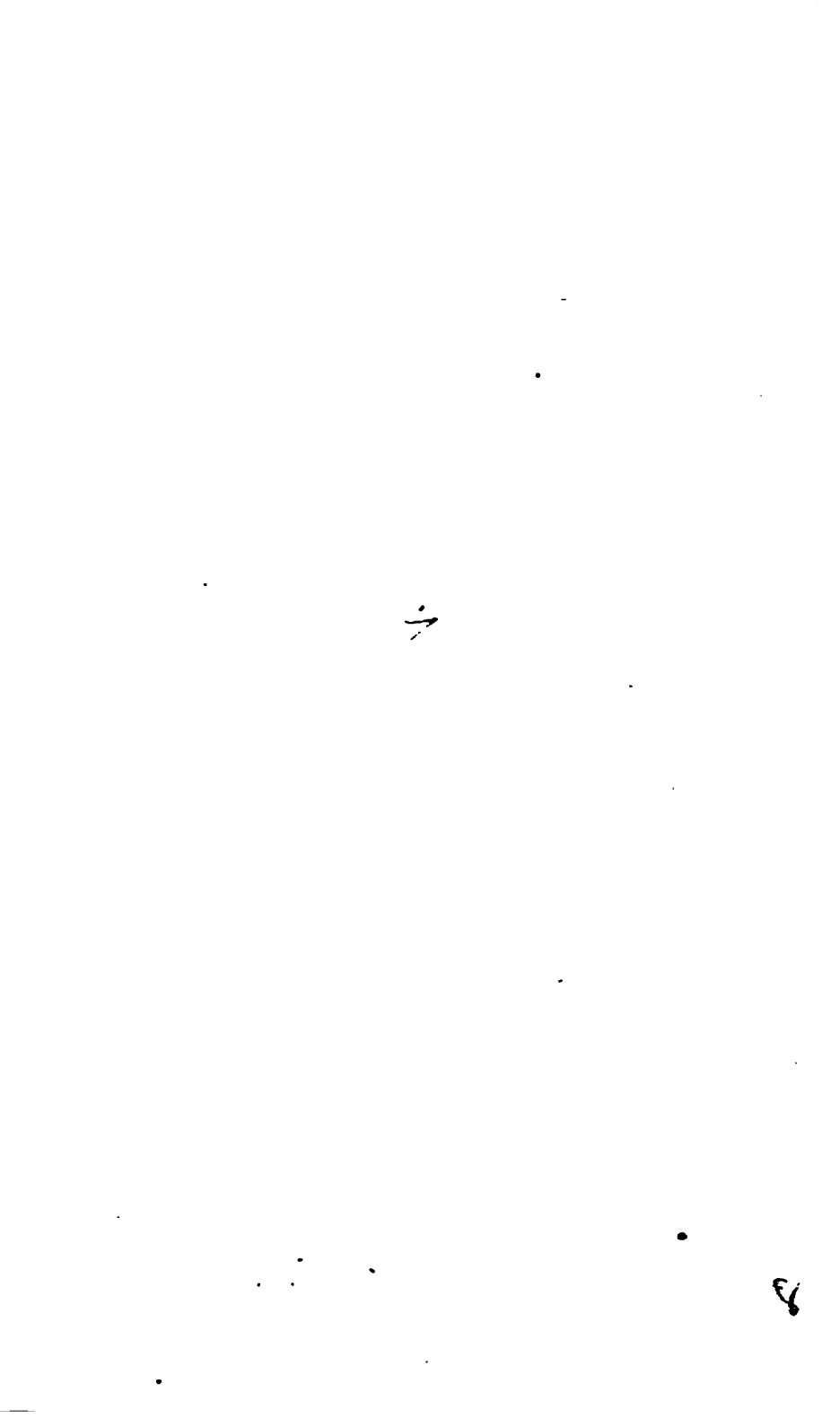
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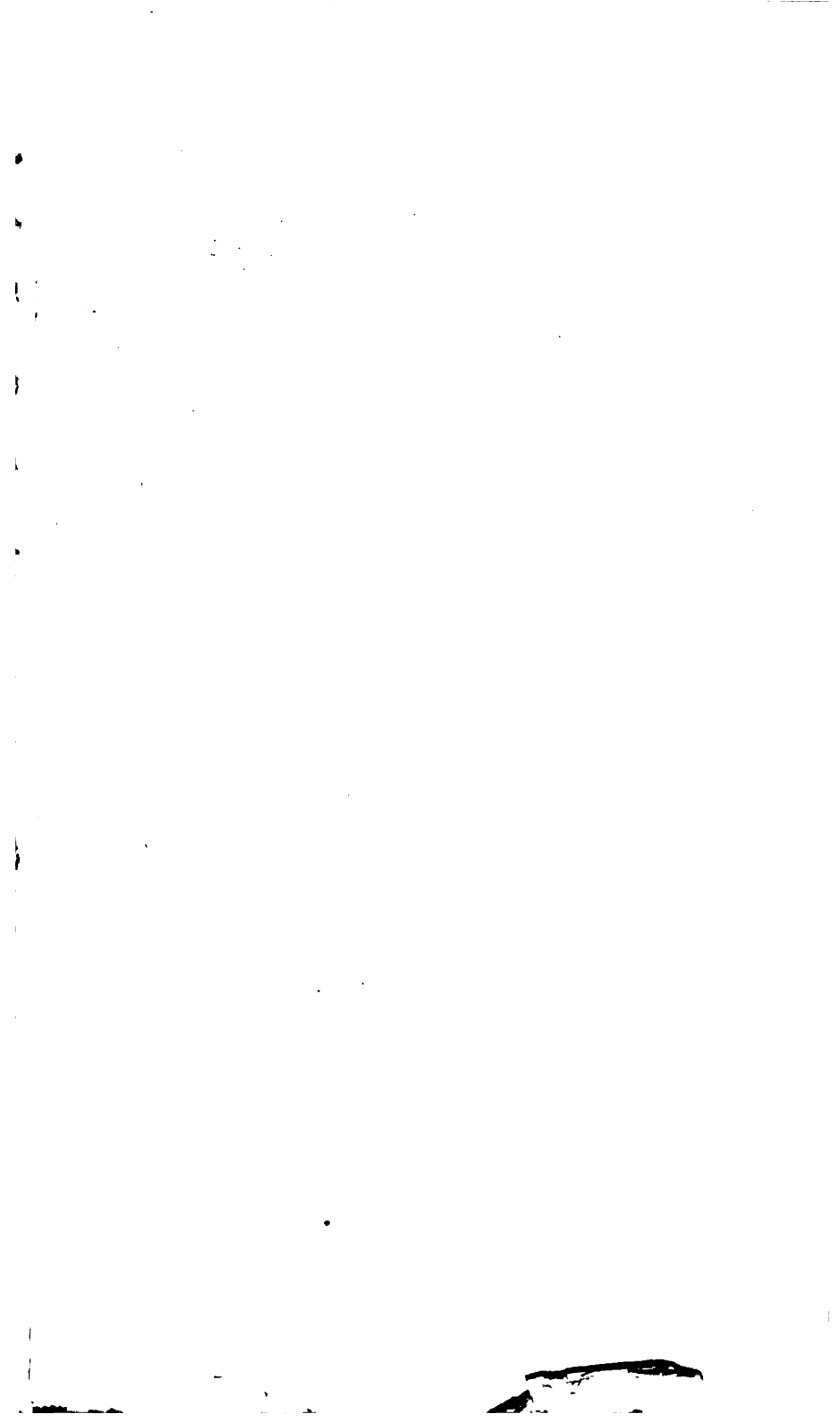
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